PRAYER TIMES

FROM THE EQUATOR TO THE POLES

Prof. Abdulaziz BAYINDIR

SULEYMANIYE FOUNDATION

CENTRE OF RESEARCH ON RELIGION AND NATURE

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Since 1978, I have been expressing the view at every occasion that the times of fajr and isha' are calculated wrongly, and that it causes adversities. We have documented these mistakes to a great extent during our observations between 1988-1991, under the leadership of 'The Presidency of Turkish Religious Affairs' (Turkish Diyanet). Later, I have continued my research by making observations at every location I visited.

As the Centre of Research on Religion and Nature of the Süleymaniye Foundation, we organized two visits in the second week of January, and the fourth week of June in 2011 to Tromsø in Norway: the northernmost settlement (i.e. nearest to the North Pole), where we carried out observations. Hence we have discovered the Qur'anic injunctions that the night has no indicator, while the indicator of the daytime is not the Sun, but its duha. In addition, we have come to realize that in the summer, the times of prayers and of fasting could be calculated from the data of the poles as well as from the observations, and that the criteria of calculation are given in the Qur'an in detail. We have also derived the criteria for the determination of prayer times from the Qur'an and Sunnah, for the persons without access to a calendar or a watch.

As would be discovered by reading the related verses, Allah has ordained the times and places of the Sunrays to immutable measures. The angles these rays make with the axis of the earth, the eastern horizon, the observer and the circle they travel on 360 degrees in a day, are extremely important in the determination of prayer times.

The circle on which the sunrays travel, is continuously parallel to the axis of the earth at the poles and makes with it a zero degree angle. This angle is 90 degrees at the equator.

The shade is extremely important in the calculation of prayer times. The angle that the sun makes with the observer at the Pole, is equal to the declination of the sun, or the angle made by the axis of the earth and the sunrays.

The sum of the shade angles at the North or South Pole with that at the equator, is always 90 degrees. When the shade lengthens at the pole, it shortens at the equator, and vice versa.

When the sunrays are incident on the pole, the observation point is always illuminated. As we shall see later, the Qur'an has withdrawn the sun to be the indicator of day and night. Therefore it is a mundane reality to have nights with the presence of the sun and daytime in the absence of the sun. Although this situation only begins at the 66°33' parallel and continues to be observed up to the pole, its effects can go down to the 45 degree parallel. It is for this reason that the 66°33'parallel should be named **'the salat tropic'.**

What makes the calculation of prayer times difficult at the poles, is the fact that the great scholars had not been to the region or not spent any time there. Otherwise it would not have been difficult to understand the verses related to the 'salat tropic'. Thus, the absolute necessity of the knowledge of shade lengths, the tilt angle of the earth, and the angle of incidence of the sunrays in the calculation of prayer times, would have been discovered.

Had the subject been treated in unison with the Qur'an and the Sunnah, the parallel at the poles where sunrays make a 0 degree angle with the axis of the earth, would not be given the

value of 90 degrees, and the equator would not be assigned the 0 degree parallel where the sunrays make an angle of 90 degrees. These cause complexities in the calculation of prayer times.

As the sunrays are continuously incident at 90 degrees at the equator, the duration of days and nights are nearly equal. In summer, the length of days and nights are also equal at the poles. The permanence of the duha and elimination of the night's indicatorship, cannot be used as evidence for claiming one of them to be shorter or longer than the other. This equality continues along the salat tropic where the sun does not set. At other parallels, the angle of incidence of sunrays, determines the duration of daytime and nights. In the winter, the duration of daytime beyond the salat tropic, varies by the incidence of sunrays.

Moreover, there are the twilight phenomena or calculation of the times of fajr and isha' prayers. They are determined according to the incoming or disappearing sunrays in the observed horizon. Leaving the issue to be solved by the astronomers has tilted the balance. As astronomers make observations of the stars, astronomical twilight was calculated according to the rays arriving at the upper zone of the atmosphere. As we do not live in the upper zone of the atmosphere, this twilight has nothing to do with the calculation of the prayer times. It is because of this great mistake that the concepts of dawn and fajr-al kazib (false fajr), have disappeared, and the isha' prayer has been shifted outside its own time.

As far as we know, this study is the 'first' in this area. Through criticisms, I believe our mistakes will be pointed out and the subject will mature further.

I. CONCEPTS

A. THE SUN

Sunrays are important for the calculation of prayer times. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَضِيَاء وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا

“It is He Who made the sun to be a source of light and the moon to be a reflector of light...” (Yunus/ Jonah 10:5)

Hence when making calculations, it is the lights of these two celestial bodies reaching us that are taken into account, and not the actual bodies. As we shall see later, Allah Almighty has removed the indicator of the night and made duha the indicator of the day. As a result, Allah has made it possible to have days without the sun and nights with the sun by removing the sun to be the indicator of the night or the day. Although explicitly described by the Qur’an, this point went unnoticed in the past, and it was not possible to calculate prayer times at the poles.

1. Diya (ضياء):

It is the sunrays that are used to calculate the times of prayers.

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِن جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمُ اللَّيْلَ سَرْمَدًا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَنْ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُ اللَّهِ يَأْتِيكُم بِضِيَاء أَفَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ.

“Say: “Have you ever considered [this]: If Allah had willed that there should always be night about you, without break, until the Day of Rising - is there any deity other than Allah that could bring you the light (diya)? Will you not, then, listen?”

(Al-Qasas/ The Stories 28:71)

2. Duha (الضحى):

Duha are the sunrays that come out only during the daytime. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا .وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاهَا . وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّاهَا . وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا .

“By the sun and its duha, and [by] the moon when it follows it, and [by] the day when it displays it, and [by] the night when it covers it.” (Ash-Shams/ The Sun 91:1-4)

According to the Arabic grammar, the pronoun ‘it = ها’, may refer to either ‘the duha’ or ‘the sun’ in the following part of the verse: ‘وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّاهَا = (by) the day when it displays it’. In other words, the daytime may bring out the sun or just its duha. Therefore, in the poles during the daytime when the sun does not rise, only the duha of the sun can be seen.

Exactly the same applies to the part: ‘[by] the night when it covers it = وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا’. The pronoun ‘it =ها’ may also refer to either ‘the duha’ or ‘the sun’. In other words, the night may wrap over the duha just as it wraps over the sun. In the Polar Regions, the sunny nights wrap over the duha. It is for this reason that duha is different from diya (the light). This we understand from the following verses:

“And when We said to the angels, “Prostrate to Adam,” and they prostrated, except Iblees; he refused. Then we said: ‘O Adam! Verily, this is an enemy to you and to your wife; so let him not get you both out of that garden, so that you are landed in misery. Therein you neither suffer from hunger, nor go naked. Nor suffer from thirst, nor from the sun’s duha.” (Ta-Ha 20:116-119)

It is the shady areas in the garden that saved Sayyidina Adam from the duha. According to the following verse, duha is the cause of the temperature difference between the night and the day:

وَلَا الظِّلُّ وَلَا الْحَرُورُ

“Nor is the shade equivalent of the heat.” (Al-Fatir/ The Initiator 35:21)

The shade here also means ‘night’. According to the following verse, the night is the shady part of the earth:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا. ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَاهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا. وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا وَالنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ النَّهَارَ نُشُورًا .

“Have you not considered your Lord - how He extends the shadow, and if He commanded, He could have made it stationary? Then We made the sun for it an indication. Then We withdraw the shade unto us gradually. And He it is who made the night a covering for you and the sleep a repose and made the daytime for spreading across (the earth).” (Al-Furqan/ The Criterion 25:45-47)

Extending of the shade means lengthening of the nights. The verse ‘And He it is who made the night a covering for you and the sleep a repose’, shows the night to be a shade that comforts and relaxes the man. Just like those wishing to sleep during the daytime look for a shade.

The white nights are like shades providing protection from the effects of the sun. As the duha of the sun is absent during this time, people and animals are able to sleep comfortably. That is what is expected from the night. As evidenced (during our observations) in Tromsø, we were not bothered by the sunrays filling our rooms and did not need to draw the curtains at night during the last week of June when the sun does not set.

3. **Noor (**النور**)**

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاء وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا

“It is He Who made the sun to be a source of light and the moon to be a reflector of light…” (Yunus/ Jonah 10:5)

Noor is the reflected or derived light that does not bother man. Sunrays reflected from the moon is noor just like the light seen during the white nights. As the sunrays come percolating through the night, they do not prevent resting.

وَمِن رَّحْمَتِهِ جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِن فَضْلِهِ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

"Of His mercy He has appointed for you night and daytime, for you to repose in and seek after His bounty, that maybe you will be thankful."

(Al-Qasas/ The Stories 28:73)

وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا

"…Who has made the night for a repose…" (Al-An'am/ The Cattle 6:96)

4. Criterion of Time

Just as Allah provides a criterion for everything, He has provided a criterion for the times and ordained as follows:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاء وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَّرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُواْ عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ

"It is He Who made the sun to be a source of light and the moon to be a reflector of light, and He who measured out stages for it (the diya of the sun)[1] ; that you might know the count of years and the calculation." (Yunus/ Jonah 10:5)

The phrase 'measured out' (التَّقْدير) in the verse means laying down a criterion[2]. Allah creates everything in accordance with measures it needs to conform. It is neither less nor in excess[3]. Related verses are:

قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا

"Allah has set a measure (qadr) for all things." (At-Talaq/ The Divorce 65:3)

---

[1]This verse has been translated as the verb وَقَدَّرَهُ, is taken to mean قدر له. There are examples of such usage in Arabic language.
إعراب القرآن للنحاس (2 / 140): وَقَدَّرَهُ مَنازِلَ بمعنى وقدّر له مثل وَإِذا كالُوهُمْ [المطففين: 3] ويجوز أن يكون المعنى قدّره ذا منازل مثل وَسْئَلِ الْقَرْيَةَ [يوسف: 82]

The pronoun 'ha ه', which means 'its' in the verse was taken to point at the moon but it is also possible to accept that it points at both the moon and the sun. There are also such expressions in the Qur'an. Below is a verse:
وَاللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُرْضُوهُ
"Allah and His Messenger are more worthy to be pleased by them." (At-Tawba/ The Repentance 9:62)
The pronoun is singular as يُرْضُوهُ in this verse instead of being dual as يُرْضُوهما.

تفسير البيضاوي = أنوار التنزيل وأسرار التأويل (3 / 105):وَقَدَّرَهُ مَنازِلَ الضمير لكل واحد أي قدر مسير كل واحد منهما منازل، أو قدره ذا منازل أو للقمر
There is great wisdom in this expression. Because, a messenger is a person who delivers someone's message to someone else. Similarly, the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) carries Allah's words to people. And therefore, the content of the Messenger is the content of Allah.

It is also claimed that the pronoun points at 'the noor'.
التحرير والتنوير (11 / 94): وَالضَّمِيرُ الْمَنْصُوبُ فِي (قَدَّرَهُ) : إِمَّا عَائِدٌ إِلَى النُّورِ فَتَكُونُ الْمَنَازِلُ بِمَعْنَى الْمَرَاتِبِ، وَهِيَ مَرَاتِبُ نُورِ الْقَمَرِ فِي الْقُوَّةِ وَالضَّعْفِ التَّابِعَةُ لِمَا يَظْهَرُ لِلنَّاسِ نَيِّرًا مِنْ كُرَةِ الْقَمَرِ، كَمَا فِي قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْناهُ مَنازِلَ حَتَّى عادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ الْقَدِيمِ [يس: 39] . أَيْ حَتَّى نَقُصَ نُورُهُ
In our opinion, the pronoun 'ha ه' which means 'its' points at the word diya ضِيَاء. The translation of the verse is: "He has measured out manazil for diya". Because, manazil means arrival places and times. What arrives cannot be the moon or the sun, but the diya coming from the sun. That diya arrives at the moon, too. Allah Almighty commands:
وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْنَاهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتَّى عَادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ الْقَدِيمِ
"And the moon,- We have measured out stages on it. Then it turns like the withered lower part of a date-stalk." (Ya-Sin 36:39)
People see not the moon but 'the noor' of the 'diya' reflected from the sun. This meaning was not assigned to this sentence in any of the interpretations we studied.

[2]Jawhari, al-Sihah fi al-Lugha, Art.قدر

[3]Al-Mufradat, Art.قدر

إِنَّا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَاهُ بِقَدَرٍ

"We have created everything according to a measure." (Al-Qamar/ The Moon 54:49)

وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدَرًا مَّقْدُورًا

"Allah's command is in a determined measure." (Al-Ahzab/ The Allies 33:38)

5. Mizan (equilibrium, balance)(الميزان)

Mizan is derived from the root wezn = وزن and means 'equilibrium' or 'balance'. Wezn means, to determine the measure of something. To equilibrate (muwazana) is also derived from the same root[4]. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ ...

"Indeed, We sent Our Messengers with the clear signs, and We sent down with them the Book and the Balance so that people might uphold justice." (Al-Hadid/ The Iron 57:25)

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ . أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ . وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ .

"And the sky, He raised it up, and set the Balance. So weigh with justice, and skimp not in the Balance." (Ar-Rahman/ The Endlessly Beneficent 55:7-9)

Allah Almighty has established balances for the night and the daytime, and created divisions within them. He identified every division via calculation, and determined the things to be done in each of them. Those calculating the times of prayers, should neither exceed nor reduce this balance.

6. Manazil (المنازل)

Manazil (المنازل) is the plural of Manzil (stage) (المنزل). The meaning of the verse 'determined stages for it' (Yunus/ Jonah 10:5) is: 'Allah has fixed the arrival times and places of the sunrays with immutable rules. Hence manazil are the places and angles of incidence of the sunrays. These vary daily and annually.

a. Daily Manazil

The manazil of sunrays is completed on a 360 degree circle every day. Since the earth rotates from the west towards the east, we perceive as if the sun moves from the east towards the west. Divisions of day are determined in accordance with the manazil and the arrival angles of the sunrays.

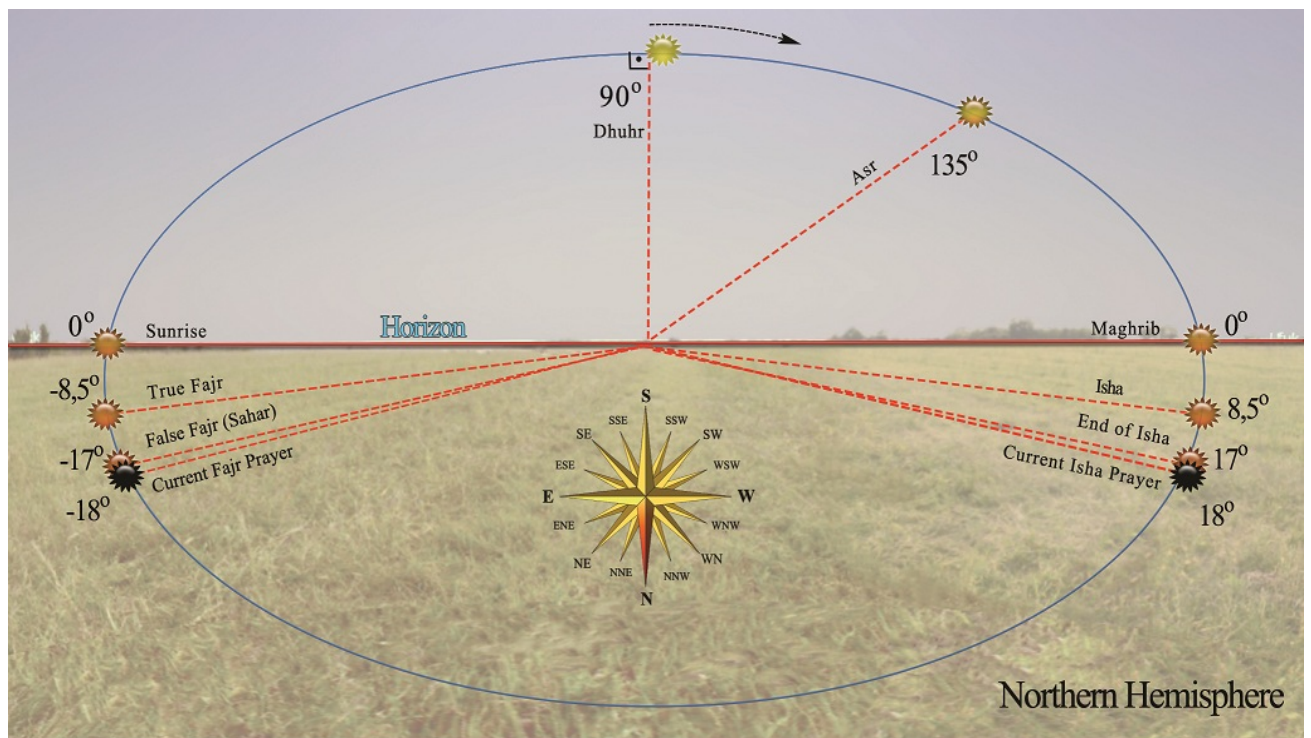
Outside the salat tropic, during the sun rise and the sun set, the angle that the sunrays make with the observer is 0°.When the sun reaches the zenith point, it is perpendicular to the meridian that is assumed to pass through that point. At this moment, the sunrays attain the

[4] Kitab al-Ayn, Mufradat, al-Sihah, Makayis al-Lugha.

highest angle of the day, and the shadows reach their lowest length. This is called zawal shadow ‘**fay-zawal**’ (فيئ الزوال).

As the sun moves towards the west from the zenith, the time for dhuhr prayer begins. From this moment onwards, the sun continuously loses its angle and moves towards the western horizon.

When the sun travels half way of the arch from the zenith to the western horizon, the time for asr prayer begins. At this instance, when we subtract the zawal length from the length of shadow, we find the real length of the object. For instance, if the zawal length of a one meter high object was 30 cm, it would become 130 cm at this point.

The following explanations about prayer times can be understood more easily if the following figure is studied carefully:

When the angle of sunrays becomes 0° with respect to the observer, its periphery is no longer visible and the sun sets. At this very instance, the time for maghrib starts, and those fasting, break their fast. In order to ascertain the setting of the sun behind a hill, it is necessary to look at the east. When a darkness appears in the east, the sun is considered set.

When the sun goes -8,5° below the horizon, the time for isha’ begins.

When the sun goes -17° below the horizon, the time for isha’ ends, and the longest part of the night called ‘ghasak al-layl’ or the middle of the night, begins. It may also be called half of the night (nifs al-layl). This is a time for sleeping, relaxation and offering tahajjud prayers. The time of sahar, is included in this period.

The sahar time starts as the sun approaches the eastern horizon at -17°. The illumination that can be detected above the horizon, starts moving downwards and wraps the horizon. This

illumination is misleading, and therefore, it is called the false fajr (fajr al-kazib). Those fasting eat their meals during this time.

When the sun's angle becomes -8,5°, the true fajr begins. The time for fajr prayer starts and restrictions concerning fasting, begin. When the sun goes above 0° in the eastern horizon, the sun rises, and the time for fajr prayer ends. When rising and setting are in question, it is the outer edge of the sun and not its centre that is taken into account.

Along the salat tropic, during the days that the sun does not set, the dhuhr and asr prayer times are calculated on the same principles. Since the North and South poles are points, there are no east or west directions. In the parallels below them, the east and west points are calculated according to the east and the west points established on 21st of March and on 23rd of September.

At the poles, manazil of the sunrays are continuously parallel to the axis of the earth and make an angle of 0 degrees with it. This angle is 90 degrees at the equator. Therefore, in terms of the calculation of prayer times, contrary to prevalent approach, it is more appropriate to assign 0 degrees to the parallel at the poles, and assign 90 degrees to that at the equator, and make the calculation from poles towards the equator.

When we look at the declination of the sun, i.e., the angle it makes with the axis of the earth, the necessity of starting the calculation from the poles, becomes obvious. That is, because the angle the sun makes with the observer, is equal to declination. This angle affects all shades.

If the pole is taken to be the 0 degree parallel and the equator the 90 degree parallel, the angle of the shade created by the sun as it crosses the meridian, is found by adding the angle formed at the pole to the value of the parallel. For instance, if the sun shade angle is 23° 27' at the pole, at the 10 degree parallel, this angle will become 33° 27'; and 53° 27' at the 30° parallel; 83° 27' at the 60° parallel. These calculations are made by taking the Pole as the zero parallel. If calculation is made by taking the equator as the zero degree parallel, the calculation must be made in the reverse order.

This angle cannot exceed ninety degrees. If the sum of the angle and the value of the meridian exceed ninety degrees, the part that exceeds ninety will be subtracted from ninety. Because, there is a rule derived from the Qur'an: if something transgresses its boundaries, it will transform into its opposite.

For instance if the sun shade angle at the poles is 15°, the shade angle at 80 degree parallel will be 85°. The sum of 15 and 80 is 95. First we subtract the excess over 90 degrees of 5° remainder being 90°. In order for the transgressing amount to transform into its opposite, another 5° will be subtracted to obtain 85°. This is the outcome of rule of the creator of the shade. Due to this rule, the sum of the angles of shades at the Poles and at the Equator will always be 90 degrees. When it lengthens at the poles, it shortens at the equator and vice versa.

As the shade is extremely important in the calculation of the prayer times, the necessity of beginning the calculations from the poles becomes prominent once more.

There is also the angle that sun's circle make with the eastern and western horizons; these angles attain their maximum value when the sun is right above the meridian. All this is related to sun's daily manazil.

b. Annual Manazil

The angle of incidence of sunrays at a point not only changes during the day but also during the year. For instance in June and July, it is summer in the northern hemisphere. During these months, the angle of incidence of sunrays in the northern hemisphere is higher. Same thing happens in the months of December and January in the southern hemisphere. These cause variations in the duration of the daytime.

When the sunrays are incident on the pole, the observation point is continuously illuminated. Since the Qur'an has eliminated the indicator of the daytime and removed the sun as the indicator of the daytime, it is necessary to have nights in the presence of the sun and daytime in the absence of the sun. Since this is only observed beginning slightly below the 66^o 33' parallel up to the poles, it has become imperative to call this parallel the 'salat tropic'.

On the equator, the angle of incidence of sunrays, are always nearly perpendicular, and the length of daytime is nearly equal to night. Duration of daytime and night are also equal in the poles during the summer. There is no evidence to consider one being longer than the other. This equality continues along the salat tropic where the sun does not set. At other parallels, the angle of incidence of the sunrays, affects the durations of daytime and night. In the winter, along the salat tropic, duration of the daytime varies by the angles of incidence of the reflected rays from the sun.

7. Calculation

Calculation, (الْحِسَابَ = al-hisab or الحسبان husban[5]) means to use the numbers; to carry a known criterion to the unknown[6]. The calculation of prayer times is to apply the measures identified from the movement of the sun, to the unknown which cannot be derived from the sun's movement.

B. ROTATION OF THE EARTH AROUND ITS AXIS

The evidence of the rotation of the earth around its axis, is the shades which are main indicators of the calculation of prayer times. Shades move towards the west in the morning; towards the south or the north at noon depending on the position of the sun, and towards the east in the evening. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى رَبِّكَ كَيْفَ مَدَّ الظِّلَّ وَلَوْ شَاءَ لَجَعَلَهُ سَاكِنًا ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا الشَّمْسَ عَلَيْهِ دَلِيلًا. ثُمَّ قَبَضْنَاهُ إِلَيْنَا قَبْضًا يَسِيرًا . وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِبَاسًا وَالنَّوْمَ سُبَاتًا وَجَعَلَ النَّهَارَ نُشُورًا.

"Have you not considered your Lord - how He extends the shadow, and if He commanded, He could have made it stationary? Then We made the sun for it an

---

[5]Al-Sihah Art.حسب. حَسَبْتُهُ أَحْسَبُهُ بالضم حَسْباً وحِساباً وحُسْباناً وحِسابَةً، إذا عَدَدْتَهُ.

[6]Al-Mufradat, Art. حسب. الحسبان: أن يحكم لأحد النقيضين من غير أن يخطر الآخر بباله، فيحسبه ويعقد عليه الإصبع.

indication. Then We withdraw the shade unto us gradually. And He it is Who made the night a covering for you and the sleep a repose and made the daytime for spreading across (the earth).” (Al-Furqan/ The Criterion 25:45-47)

The shade is moved by the sun. In order that the sun appears rising from the east and setting from the west, the earth must rotate from the west to the east. Otherwise the shades would have been stationary. As a result, one part of the earth would always remain dark and the other part would always be illuminated.

C. THE OSCILLATION OF THE EARTH LIKE A CRADLE AND THE TILT OF ITS AXIS

Allah Almighty informs us that He has made the earth like a cradle. Related verses are as follows:

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَسَلَكَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْ نَبَاتٍ شَتَّى

“**He Who appointed the earth to be a cradle for you, and therein threaded roads for you, and sent down water out of heaven, and therewith have We produced pairs of plants each separate from the others**.” (Ta-Ha 20:53)

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

“He Who appointed the earth to be a cradle for you, and appointed ways for you therein, that you may reach your aim.” (Az-Zukhruf/ Gold Adornments 43:10)

For the earth to be a cradle, it should rock both ways. Depending on the position of the tilt, while one part of the equator faces the sun, the opposite stays away from the sun. It is for this reason that the sunrays become almost perpendicular to the northern hemisphere at certain times of the year, and to the southern hemisphere at other times.

In accordance with the following verse, there are two easts and two wests :

رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقَيْنِ وَرَبُّ الْمَغْرِبَيْنِ . فَبِأَيِّ آلَاءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

“(He is) Lord of the two easts and Lord of the two wests. Then which of the favors of your Lord will you deny?” (Ar-Rahman/ The Endlessly Beneficent 55:17-18)

The first thing that comes to mind is the to and fro movement of the sun on an arch. However, as the Qur’anic verses explain one another, it would be appropriate to understand the above verse in conjunction with the following verses:

فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِرَبِّ الْمَشَارِقِ وَالْمَغَارِبِ إِنَّا لَقَادِرُونَ

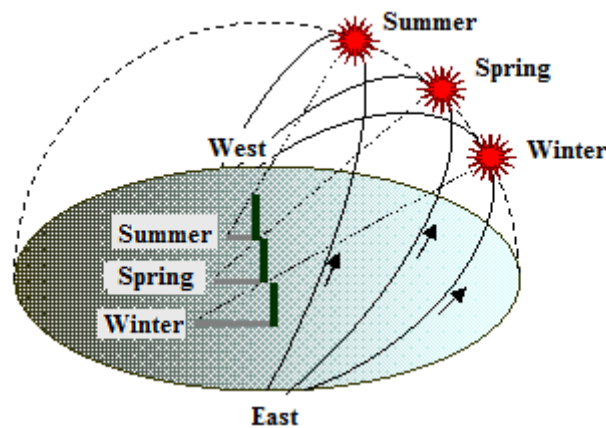
“No! I swear by the Lord of the Easts and Wests, We certainly set measures.[7]”

(Al-Ma’arij/ The Elevators 70:40)

[7]This is a phrase peculiar to Arabic language; the One Who takes the oath and defines the measure is Allah.

The easts and the wests are plural. In Arabic, plural form denotes three and more. When we consider the two verses together, it becomes obvious that the rising and setting points of sun are multiples of two. In other words, the sun rises and sets on the same point twice per year along the eastern and western horizons. This necessitates the earth to move like a cradle, rocking to one side on one occasion and rocking to the other side on the other occasion, and to be perpendicular twice a year.

Observations show that in reality the sun rises and sets on different points on an arch extending along the horizon every day. It rises and sets twice at the end point and starts its return journey; these points are called 'days of reversal/solstices'. It then rises and sets at the same points hence rising and setting twice at the same point in a year.

In the northern hemisphere, the shades that constantly lengthen after March 21st begin to shorten after June 21. Exactly the opposite takes place in the southern hemisphere.

Angles of incidence of sunrays and the length of the shades[8]

The earth is like a cradle

The earth rocks to two sides like a cradle

The pole on the tilted side of the earth is under sunlight during day and night, while the other pole receives the reflection of the illumination of the sun. These are the regions falling within the salat tropic.

D. THE NIGHT AND THE DAYTIME

---

[8]This diagram is taken from the following website and edited: http://www.safrancicegi.com/wp-content/2008/04/image00840.gif

The part of the earth facing the sun, is illuminated whereas the other side is in the shade. The part facing the sun has daytime, while there is night on the other side. However, this is not always the case. That is, because the night, the daytime, the sun and the moon are independent beings with different orbits. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَوَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ

"And it is He Who created the night and the daytime and the sun and the moon; all in an orbit are swimming." (Al-Anbiya/ The Prophets 21:33)

وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَّهَاذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ. وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَّرْنَاهُ مَنَازِلَ حَتَّعَادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ الْقَدِيمِ . لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنبَغِي لَهَا أَن تُدْرِكَالْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ

"And the sun runs its course in the way reserved for it. That is the measure set by The Exalted In Might, The All-Knowing. And the moon,- We have measured out stages on it. Then it turns like the withered lower part of a date-stalk. The sun cannot catch up the moon, nor can the night outstrip the daytime: Each swims along in (its own) orbit."

(Ya-Sin 36:38-40)

Night and daytime are like intersecting rings; in one part of the day, the daytime is dominant and it outstrips the night; in the other, the night dominates and outstrips the daytime. They continuously interchange places.

يُغْشِي اللَّيْلَ النَّهَارَ يَطْلُبُهُ حَثِيثًا ...

"…He covers the daytime with the night chasing it continuously,"

(Al-A'raf/ The Elevated Place 7:54)

The fact that these entities being independent from the sun, shows that there could be nights with the sun as well as daytime without the sun. They are like the moon. The moon receives its light from the sun, but is not dependent on the sun. The darkness or illumination of the night and the daytime are due to sun but they are not dependent on the sun.

يقلب الله الليل والنهار إن في ذلك لعبرة لأولي الأبصار

"He alternates the night and the daytime. Verily in these things is an instructive example for those who have vision!" (An-Noor/ The Light 24:44)

Night wrapping over the daytime

Daytime wrapping over the night

خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِالْحَقِّ يُكَوِّرُ اللَّيْلَ عَلَى النَّهَارِوَيُكَوِّرُ النَّهَارَ عَلَى اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَكُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى أَلَا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفَّارُ

"He created the heavens and earth as real beings. He wraps the night over the daytime and wraps the daytime over the night. He has subjected the sun and the moon to His command. Each one follows a course for a time appointed. Unquestionably, He is The Exalted in Might, The Forgiver." (Az-Zumar/ The Companies 39:5)

The verse 'Each one follows a course for a time appointed.', shows that the night, the daytime, the sun and the moon complete their orbits within a certain time frame. That means there is no place where night and daytime do not exist. We shall come back to this subject later.

1. Indicator of the Night

Traditionally the indicator of the daytime is the sun, and the indicator of the night is darkness. All definitions are made accordingly, but they are incorrect. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ آيَتَيْنِ فَمَحَوْنَا آيَةَ اللَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَا آيَةَالنَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً لِتَبْتَغُواْ فَضْلاً مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُواْ عَدَدَالسِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَصَّلْنَاهُ تَفْصِيلاً

"And We have made the night and the daytime two ayat's (signs), and We eliminated[9] the sign of the night, while We have made the sign of the daytime being illuminating; that you may seek bounty from your Lord, and that you may know the count of the years and the calculation: all things have We explained in detail." (Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17:12)

Ayat (الآية), means clear sign[10]. Sign is the indicator of something. 'We have made the night and the daytime two signs' shows that each is an indicator; thus without the daytime and the night, the day would not be complete. As a corollary, at the poles too, the daytime and the night are repeated everyday.

---

[9]The word which means 'eliminate' in the verse is mahw (المحو). "مَحَتِ الرِّيحُ السَّحَابَ = The wind has eliminated the cloud" (Makayis al-Lugha). This word is used in the following verse, too:

يَمْحُو اللّهُ مَا يَشَاء وَيُثْبِتُ وَعِندَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ. لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابٌ

"For every term is a decree (a record). Allah eliminates or establishes it according to His regulations and with Him is the Mother of the Book." (Ar-Ra'ad/ The Thunder 13:38-39) The cloud dragged by the wind goes somewhere else. The eliminated record is not anymore in the book but information about it is always borne in mind. Similarly, the eliminated indicator of the night does not disappear; it is only withdrawn from being an indicator.

[10]Esfahani, Ragib, (d. 425 H.), Mufradat Art. أي (thk: Safwan Adnan Dawoodi), Damascus and Beirut, 1412/1992.

As we have said ayat (الآية), means sign. Sign is the symbol, token or signal that indicates the existence of something.

In one verse it is decreed:

وَعَلامَاتٍ وَبِالنَّجْمِ هُمْ يَهْتَدُون[10]

And marks; and by the stars (men) guide themselves. (An-Nahl 16/16)
The marks here are signposts. When a person sees these signs he/she understands that he/she is in the right path.
Qur'anic verses are signposts that show the right. The miracles of the prophets are also called ayat because they are the signs of the prophethood of that person.

Mubsir (مبصر) is the word we translate as 'illuminating'. It is derived from the root 'basar' (بص), which means 'seeing with the eye'. Mubsir (مبصر) means 'the one who makes you see'. For 'mubsir' to be an indicator of the daytime, the environment should be illuminated enough to be visible to the eye, and to allow comprehension. Therefore, the daytime does not start with the illumination of the twilight zone. When the twilight zone is illuminated, surroundings are still dark.

The elimination of the indicator of the night and 'being illuminating' becoming the indicator of the daytime, changes all definitions. Since the sun is not the indicator of the daytime and darkness is not the indicator of the night, some daytime could be without the sun and some nights could be with the sun. This only occurs along the salat tropic.

Outside the salat tropic the daytime starts with the sunrise, because" mubsir (= the indication of being illuminating) begins at this very moment. In the salat tropic, where the sun does not rise or rises and sets after a short period, the daytime starts when the illumination from the east, reaches the western horizon.

Since darkness is considered to be the indicator of the night in the regions where ulama lived in the past, the meaning of the above verse was not understood and interpretations were made inconsistent with the text of the verse. The great scholar of interpretation (exegesis) Zamakhshari, offers the following three interpretations:

The first interpretation:

"The noun phrases 'the sign of the night' and 'the sign of the daytime', are like the number qualifying the qualified (e.g. 'two nights'). It means 'We have eliminated the night which was an ayat and made the daytime, which is also an ayat, illuminating.' "

In our opinion this interpretation does not reflect the text of the verse. Allah has eliminated not the night, but the indicator of the night. If He had eliminated the night, there would be night no more.

Zamakhshari's second interpretation is as follows:

"We have made the two things that illuminate the daytime and the night, namely the sun and the moon, two ayats. Then we have eliminated the ayat of the night by de-illuminating and making it dark. Just as we cannot see the things removed from a signboard, nothing can be seen clearly at night."

In our opinion this interpretation is also wrong. By saying: *"...And We have made the night and the daytime two signs"*, Allah informs us that these two are indicators in their own right. Whereas Zamakhshari gives the meaning: "we made the sun and the moon, the two things that illuminate the night and the daytime", thus he removes night and daytime as indicators, and replaces them with the sun and the moon. Despite the fact that Allah says He has eliminated the sign of the night and made the sign of the daytime being enlightening, Az-Zamakhshari says that the moon has been de-illuminated and made dark. If the moon were to be the indicator of the night, the night would begin by the moon rise and end by the moon set. This is not the case. On the other hand, the moon could not have been de-illuminated and made dark.

Because Allah ordains: **"… placed the moon in the heavens as a reflector of light and the sun as a source of light."** (Nuh/ Noah 71:16)

We may not see the things removed from a signboard, but there are traces of light at night all over the world. Even though not clear, there always exists an image. De-illuminated night has been defined as follows:

"... the state of the ones who conceal is like the depths of darkness in a wavy sea, overwhelmed with billow topped by billow, topped by cloud. Darkness, one above another. If a man stretches out his hands, he can hardly see it! And for whom Allah has not granted light, there is no light." (An-Noor/ The Light 24:40)

Al-Zamakhshari's third and final interpretation is as follows:

"It could mean 'we have eliminated the moon which was the sign of the night'. Since Allah has not created a light for the moon as He had for the sun, the entities cannot clearly be seen in its light[11]."

This interpretation, too, is unacceptable. If the indicator of the night were the moon, and the moon was eliminated, we could not be speaking of the moon. As Allah has not created for the moon a light like He has for the sun, we cannot speak of elimination of its light. Something that does not exist, cannot be eliminated.

Ibn Kathir, one of the tafsir ulama (scholar of exegesis), had made the following interpretation on the matter:

"Allah has created a sign for the night: an indicator that is associated with it. The indicator is the visibility of the darkness and the moon. He has created an indicator for the daytime which is illumination and the rise of the sun which is the source of that light. In order that they are differentiated, He made their lights different[12]."

This interpretation cannot be accepted either, for the verse does not talk of the differentiation of the indicator of the night but its elimination.

Interpretations of Elmalili Hamdi Yazir can be summarized as follows:

"If we were to call darkness the indicator of the night, by its elimination, the night would have become like daytime. Therefore it is more appropriate to consider moon as the indicator of the night. So, the moon was previously like the sun; both illuminating and heating. Allah had extinguished it and the moon, as we now know, came into being[13]."

---

[11]Mahmud b. Amr b. Ahmad az-Zamakhshari (d. 538 h.), al-Kashshaaf, Beirut 1407 h. v. II, p. 652.

[11] فيه وجهان، أحدهما: أن يراد أن الليل والنهار آيتان في أنفسهما، فتكون الإضافة في آية الليل وآية النهار للتبيين، كإضافة العدد إلى المعدود، أى: فمحونا الآية التي هي الليل وجعلنا الآية التي هي النهار مبصرة. والثاني: أن يراد: وجعلنا نيرى الليل والنهار آيتين، يريد الشمس والقمر. فمحونا آية الليل: أى جعلنا الليل ممحوّ الضوء مطموسه مظلما، لا يستبان فيه شيء كما لا يستبان ما في اللوح الممحوّ، وجعلنا النهار مبصرا أى تبصر فيه الأشياء وتستبان. أو فمحونا آية الليل التي هي القمر حيث لم يخلق لها شعاعا كشعاع الشمس، فترى به الأشياء رؤية بينة…

[12]Ismail b. Omar b. Qatheer el-Qureishy (d. 744 h.), Tafseer Al-Qur'an al-azeem, (Tahkik Sami b. Muhammad Salamah) DaruTaibah, 1999/1420, v. V, p. 5.

[12] إِنَّهُ تَعَالَى جَعَلَ لِلَّيْلِ آيَةً، أَيْ عَلَامَةً يُعْرَفُ بِهَا، وَهِيَ الظَّلَامُ وَظُهُورُ الْقَمَرِ فِيهِ، وللنهار علامة وهي النور وطلوع الشمس النيرة فيه، وفاوت بين نور القمر وضياء الشمس ليعرف هذا.

[13]Elmalili Muhammad Hamdi YAZIR, Hak Dini Kur'an Dili, Istanbul 1936, v. IV, p. 3169-3170.

This interpretation is also unacceptable. How come we claim that there is an indicator of the night and that it is the moon when Allah Almighty says **“We have eliminated the sign (ayat) of the night”**. If the moon were to be the indicator of the night, it would have to rise by the night and set by the night. The sentence starting with ‘So, the moon was previously…’ does not have the slightest relation to the verse.

Another verse related to night is as follows:

وَأَغْطَشَ لَيْلَهَا وَأَخْرَجَ ضُحَاهَا

“(Allah from the heavens) took away the indicator of the night and extracted its duha.” (An-Nazi’at/ Those Who Pull Out 79:29)

Duha was explained above.

Ghatash = الغَطَشُ, the root of the word aghtasha = أغطَشَ which we have translated as ‘made it without the sign’, means dazzling. Everything in front of an eye subjected to dazzling, is blurred, nothing appears in clarity. Ghatash, also given the meaning of sadaf (السَّدَفُ), is a mixture of darkness and illumination. Mafazat-un ghatsha = مفَازةٌ غَطْشى; is the name given to a desert where all the signs pertaining to directions of pathways are lost, and muteghatish المُتغاطِشُ is the name given to a person pretending not to see an entity[14]. All these show that the root ghatash= الغَطَشُ means ‘uncertainty’. Uncertainty pertaining to the night means that it has been made without a sign hence without an indicator.

In the tafsir and translations aghtasha =أغطَشَ has been given the meaning ‘darkened’. This is not a meaning given in the dictionaries, but a meaning given out of necessity. At night, the surroundings become uncertain; but according to the verse, what is made uncertain is not the surroundings but the night itself. Therefore, the meaning becomes: ‘(Allah) has made the night of the heavens uncertain…’. To make it uncertain means to make it without an indicator. Hence, it is necessary to translate the verse: ‘(Allah) has made the night of the heavens without a sign’.

The following verse could be given as an evidence of the night to be dark:

وَآيَةٌ لَهُمُ اللَّيْلُ نَسْلَخُ مِنْهُ النَّهَارَ فَإِذَا هُمْ مُظْلِمُونَ

“And a sign for them is the night: We withdraw therefrom the daytime, and behold they are plunged in darkness.” (Ya-Sin 36:37)

‘…Plunged in darkness’ is the translation of, فإذا هم مظلمون. The word مظلمون (mudhlimoon) could mean ‘they will enter into darkness’ as well as ‘they will enter into a glittering air’. In Arabic, the word ‘adhlama’ (أَظْلَمَ) has two opposing meanings; one is the dominance of the darkness[15], and the other is glitter. For instance, the water dripping out from the teeth is called dhalm = ظَلْمٌ, due to its purity of color. The same word is used to describe the purity and extreme glitter of the teeth.

Like in:

---

[14] Ibn Manzoor, Jamaluddin Muhammad b. Muqrim (630-711), Lisan al-Arab, Art غطش Beirut trs.

[15] أَظْلَم الليلُ: اسْوَدَّ. Lisan Al-arab.

تَجْلُو عوارِضَ ذي ظَلْمٍ إذا ابتَسَمَت

When (my sweetheart) laughs she makes her glittering rear teeth visible.[16]

When the front teeth glitter, أَظْلَمَ الثَّغْرُ is used. [17]

Since in our region, the nights are dark, the word أَظْلَم was taken to mean plunging of the darkness and the second meaning was never recalled.

2. Indicator of the Daytime

As Allah Almighty had said 'we have made the sign of the daytime being illuminating (mubsira)', a prerequisite for the daytime is, to be illuminating the surroundings. The illuminator is the daytime and not the sun. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ

"He is the One who made you the night that you may rest therein, and has made the daytime illuminating. Verily in this are signs for those who listen." (Yunus/ Jonah 10:67)

The thing that illuminates being the daytime itself and not the sun, renders the sun no longer the indicator of the daytime, and proves that there can exist daytime without the sun. Evidently, in Arabic, daytime is called 'nahar' (النهار) and defined as the time that illumination spreads[18].

At Tromsø, one of the northernmost settlements of the world, during the daytime that the sun did not rise, the surroundings were illuminated by the sunrays coming from the sun, and the daytime was formed.

Tromsø 12 December 2011, the sun is 0,5 degrees below the horizon

Tromsø 12 December 2011, the sun is 3 degrees below the horizon

Ayvalik, Turkey 21 July 2011, the sun is 4.3 degrees above the horizon

---

[16]Al- Ayn Art.ظَلْم

[17]Zabidi, Muhammad Murtada, Taj al-Arus, Art.ظَلْم Egypt 1306/1889.

أَظْلَمَ (الثَّغْرُ) : إِذَا (تَلأْلأَ) ، كَالماءِ الرَّقِيقِ، مِنْ شِدَّةِ رِقَّتِهِ،

[18]Mufradat, Art. النهر

والنهار: الوقت الذي ينتشر فيه الضوء

It was like a cloudy winter daytime on 12 January 2011 at Tromsø where the sun did not rise.

Verses related to the subject are as follows:

أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا جَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ لِيَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

"See they not that We have made the night for them to rest in and the daytime to give them light? Verily in this are signs for a people who believe!" (An-Naml/ The Ant 27:86)

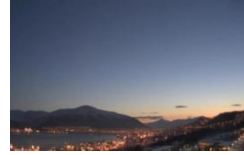
اللَّهُ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُوا فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ

"It is Allah who made for you the night that you may rest therein and the daytime light giving. Indeed, Allah is full of bounty to the people, but most of the people are not grateful." (Al-Mu'min/ The Believer 40:61)

Following photos were taken on a daytime when the sun never rose, during the second week of January 2011, in the Norwegian city Tromsø:

Daytime (sun -5°)

Noon (Sun -0,5°)

Asr (sun -1,75°)

Maghrib (Sun -7°)

Isha' (Sun -9°)

3. Customary Daytime (Nahar Urfi)

In the Arabic language, the daytime is the time between the sunrise and sunset[19]. This is called customary daytime; the word nahar (i.e. daytime) also has the same meaning. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَامِن رَّسُولٍ إِلاَّ بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ

"And We sent every messenger in the language of his people to state clearly for them." (Ibrahim/ Abraham 14:4)

4. Daytime Defined by the Sharia (Nahar Shar'i)

This is the time from the true fajr to sunset[20]. Fasting is performed during this period. Since during the twilight only the horizon is visible and not the surroundings, this definition of daytime is not correct. The concepts created without evidence, become obstacles to the correct understanding. Such a concept cannot be accepted.

[19]Mufradat, Art.النهر

وهو في الشرع: ما بين طلوع الفجر إلى وقت غروب الشمس، وفي الأصل ما بين طلوع الشمس إلى غروبها.

[20]Muhammad b. Mahmood Al-Beberti, d. 786 h. date and place not given, v. III, p. 280.

True fajr at Süleymaniye, İstanbul

E. DIVISIONS OF THE NIGHT AND THE DAYTIME

Daytime and the night, each are divided into three divisions. In the longest parts of each, there are no obligatory prayers. Morning, beginning by the rising of the sun and ending when it reaches the zenith, is the first and the longest section of the daytime; the second is the (noon) dhuhr, beginning with the movement of the sun towards the west from its zenith and, the third is the time of asr. The daytime ends with the sunset. Concerning the daytime, there are two verses in the Qur'an. The first defines the times of the obligatory prayers. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

...وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ

"And keep up prayer in the two divisions of the daytime…." (Hud 11:114)

In Arabic 'taraf = طرف' means division.[21] The two divisions of the daytime طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ that were ordained for prayer are 'dhuhr' and 'asr'. As the verse begins with a command

" وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ = keep up prayer", it is obligatory to establish prayers in these two sections. The details for these divisions will be given below.

Following verse also points to the third division of the daytime.

فَسَبِّحْ وَاَطْرَافَ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضى.

"...exalt (Allah) at the divisions of the daytime, that you may be pleased." (Ta-Ha 20:130)

The word 'atraf = اَطْرَافَ' which we have translated as 'divisions', is the plural of 'taraf = طرف'. In Arabic, plural form points at three or more entities. This verse therefore incorporates the morning, the first division of the daytime, among the times of worshipping. However as it begins with the command "سَبِّحْ = praise" and does not include an explicit command 'to pray', it is not obligatory to offer prayers in this division. Abu Hurairah was reported to have said:

"My friend Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) has bequeathed me three things: Fasting three days per month, to offer two rakas of duha (midmorning) prayer and to pray witr before going to bed[22]".

---

[21]Lisan Al-Arab, طرف Art.

[21]الناحية من النواحي والطائفة من الشي، والجمع أَطراف :والطرَفُ، بالتحريك

[22]Bukhari, Tahajjud 35; Muslim, Musafereen 85 – (721)

[22]. عن أبي هريرة، قال: أوصاني خليلي صلى الله عليه وسلم بثلاث: «بصيام ثلاثة أيام من كل شهر، وركعتي الضحى، وأن أوتر قبل أن أرقد».

1. Divisions of the Night

There are three divisions of the night. The first division is the evening; this is the time for the maghrib and isha' prayers. The second and the longest section is the midnight, which is the time for sleep, relaxation, tahajjud prayers and eating meals (suhoor in Ramadan), while the third is from the true twilight to sunrise which is the time for fajr prayers. Qur'an uses the term ثُلُثِ اللَّيْلِ = sulus'ul-layl or one third of the night for each division.

Divisions of the Night

Maghrib Maghrib Isha' Midnight or Half of the Night Sahar Fajr Fajr

Our Nabiy used to give Qur'anic training every evening in Makkah teaching people the Qur'an and the hikmah. This continued for some time in Madinah, too. The verses that describe this process, divide the night into three. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَى مِن ثُلُثَيِ اللَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُ وَثُلُثَهُ وَطَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ وَاللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ
عَلِمَ أَن لَّن تُحْصُوهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَاقْرَؤُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ عَلِمَ أَن سَيَكُونُ مِنكُم مَّرْضَى وَآخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ
فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَآخَرُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَاقْرَؤُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ
وَآتُواالزَّكَاةَ وَأَقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا
وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ.

"Indeed, your Lord knows, that you keep vigil almost *two thirds of the night or half of it or a third of it,* and [so do] a group of those with you. And it is Allah Who sets the measure of the night and the daytime. He has known that you [Muslims] will not be able to do it and has turned to you in forgiveness, so recite what is easy [for you] of the Qur'an. He has known that there will be among you those who are ill and others traveling throughout the land seeking of the bounty of Allah and others fighting for the cause of Allah. So recite what is easy from it and establish prayer and give zakah and loan Allah a goodly loan. And whatever good you put forward for yourselves, you will find with Allah which is better and greater in reward. And seek forgiveness of Allah. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful."

(Al-Muzzammil/ The Wrapped-Up 73:20).

As narrated by Ibn Abbas, this verse was revealed in Madinah[23].The following verses command recitation of the Qur'an after waking up at night. They are situated at the beginning of the surah, and were revealed in Makkah:

[23]Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606 h.), Mafatih Al-Ghayb (Tafsir Al-Kabir), Beirut 1420 h. v. 30 p. 682.

يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ . قُمِ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا . نِصْفَهُ أَوِ انقُصْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا.أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا . إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًاثَقِيلًا . إِنَّ نَاشِئَةَ اللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَشَدُّ وَطْءًا وَأَقْوَمُ قِيلًا . إِنَّ لَكَ فِيالَنَّهَارِ سَبْحًا طَوِيلًا . وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ وَتَبَتَّلْ إِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيلًا .رَبُّ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ فَاتَّخِذْهُ وَكِيلًا . وَاصْبِرْعَلَى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَاهْجُرْهُمْ هَجْرًا جَمِيلًا .

“O you, who wraps himself! Arise at night, except for a little (of it). Arise for the half of it, or a little less, or a little more; and recite the Qur’an slowly and distinctly. Soon shall We cast upon you a heavy duty. Truly getting up at night is more efficient and what you recite in it is catchier. True, there is for you by daytime prolonged occupation. But keep in remembrance the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him whole-heartedly. (He is) Lord of the East and the West. There is no god but Him. Take Him therefore as your Guardian. And have patience with what others say, and leave them gracefully.”

(Al-Muzzammil/ The Wrapped One 73:1-10)

These are among the first revealed verses. These verses prove that nightly Qur’an recitation continued for more than 13 years and that all Muslims participated. According to verse 20 of Surah Al-Muzzammil, command to read Qur’an for the purpose of understanding it, is still valid today. Only the obligation to read it every night has been removed, instead, a duty only to recite what is easy to the person from the Qur’an has been prescribed. The details for the sub-sections of the night are as follows:

a. Twilight of The Night

Twilight of the night begins with the end of the daytime and continues till all the stars become visible, in other words till the sun goes 17° below the horizon. The end of the daytime is indicated by sunset between the salat tropic and the equator, and it is calculated by other methods for polar latitudes and the poles. Since stars cannot be observed clearly before the weather completely darkens, the astronomers call this ‘astronomical twilight’. Maghrib and isha’ prayers are performed during this time.

According to a narration by Ibn Abbas (r.a.) during the time of Nabiy (p.b.u.h.) when the people performed their atamah (isha’) prayer, they would fast till the following night; they were forbidden to eat, drink or have sexual relation. Acting in infidelity, a man had sexual relation with his wife but continued to fast. Allah Almighty wanted to transform this into ease, permission and benefit, and commanded:

“It has been made lawful for you calling your wives to obscenity on the nights of fasting. They are a covering for you and you are a covering for them. Allah knew that you were doing deeds that would abuse the trust in you and He accepted your repentance. Now you are permitted to have intercourse with your wives. Seek that which Allah has ordained for you. Eat and drink, until the white streak of fajr appears to you distinct from its black streak. Then complete your fast till night-fall.”

(Al-Baqarah/ The Cow 2:187)[24]

[24]Abu Dawood, Sawm, 1 Mabda al-fard as-siyam.

Atamah (العتمة); is the period that begins with the dispersion of the redness which becomes prominent after the sunset and continues till the end of the first one-third of the night; in other words, it is the period for isha'. Arabs of the desert used to ride their camels for some time after the sunset, then laid them down to rest for some time, and then raised them up and milked them. They used to do these after some part of the night had elapsed.[25] Muslims performed Atamah (isha') prayer between the disappearance of the shafaq and the (second) one-third of the night[26].

b. Middle of the Night

Arabs call it half of the night (نصف الليل) or middle of the night (وسط الليل). The term 'half of the night' (نصفه) appears in verses 3 and 20 in Surah Al-Muzzammil, whose translations were given above.

c. Twilight of The Morning

Towards the end of the sahar time, the light begins to spread along the horizon. When the darkness of the land is separated with distinct lines from a red band above and a white band further up, the true fajr begins. At this point, the sun is 9° below the horizon.

When the sun reaches 6° below the horizon, the objects around can be apprehended and the brightest stars can be seen in the sky. Today we call it 'the civil twilight' whereas in the fiqh it is called the time of 'isfar (الاسفار)'. Since the recitation from the Qur'an during the fajr prayer is kept long, the time of isfar usually begins, even when the congregation that performed their fajr prayer from the early minutes of the fajr time, leaves the mosque.

When the sun rises, the night ends. Because the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) said : *''When the night shows its face, the daytime turns its back, and the sun sets the person fasting breaks his/her fast''*[27]. If we apply this to the daytime, we can say: 'when the daytime shows its face, the night turns its back and the sun rises the daytime begins.'

2. Divisions of the Daytime

Daytime too, has three sections; they are morning, noon and asr.

a. Morning

[24] 2313 - حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ شَبُّوَيْهِ، حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ حُسَيْنِ بْنِ وَاقِدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ يَزِيدَ النَّحْوِيِّ، عَنْ عِكْرِمَةَ، عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ، {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ} [البقرة: 183] ، " فَكَانَ النَّاسُ عَلَى عَهْدِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِذَا صَلَّوُا الْعَتَمَةَ حَرُمَ عَلَيْهِمُ الطَّعَامُ وَالشَّرَابُ وَالنِّسَاءُ، وَصَامُوا إِلَى الْقَابِلَةِ، فَاخْتَانَ رَجُلٌ نَفْسَهُ، فَجَامَعَ امْرَأَتَهُ، وَقَدْ صَلَّى الْعِشَاءَ، وَلَمْ يُفْطِرْ، فَأَرَادَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ أَنْ يَجْعَلَ ذَلِكَ يُسْرًا لِمَنْ بَقِيَ وَرُخْصَةً وَمَنْفَعَةً، فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ: {عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ} [البقرة: 187] الْآيَةَ، وَكَانَ هَذَا مِمَّا نَفَعَ اللَّهُ بِهِ النَّاسَ وَرَخَّصَ لَهُمْ وَيَسَّرَ "

[25] Al-Azhar, Muhammad b. Ahmad Al-Harawee (d. 370 h.), Tahzeeb Al-lugha Tahkik, Muhammad Ivaz Mur'ib (محمد عوض مرعب) Beirut 2001, 2/171.

[26] Bukhari, Adhan 162.

[26] وَكَانُوا يُصَلُّونَ العَتَمَةَ فِيمَا بَيْنَ أَنْ يَغِيبَ الشَّفَقُ إِلَى ثُلُثِ اللَّيْلِ الأَوَّلِ

[27] Muslim, Siyam 51 – (1100)

[27] قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: «إذا أقبل الليل وأدبر النهار، وغابت الشمس فقد أفطر الصائم» لم يذكر ابن نمير

This is the time from beginning of the daytime to the sun's arrival at the zenith point within a day's orbit. The beginning of the daytime is indicated by sunrise between the salat tropic and the equator, and is calculated by other methods for polar latitudes and the poles.

b. Noon (Dhuhr)

This is the time starting from the suns arrival at the zenith point to the time when all objects have a shadow equal to their length. The length of the shadow is measured after subtracting the shadow at the time when the sun was at the zenith point (fay zawal).

Qur'an considers the noon as the time of repose. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

"Oh you who believe! Let those whom your right hands possess, and the (children) among you who have not come of age ask your permission (before they come to your presence), on three occasions: before dawn prayer; the time when you take off your clothes in the afternoon; and after the Isha' prayer. These are your three times of undress." (An-Noor/ The Light 24:58)

Those that take a rest at noon would not be bothered by long daytime and short nights in the summer, and could make it a point of principle to go to work early.

c. Asr

This period starts from the time that the shadow of everything becomes equal to its height, till the time of sunset.

According to our observations, time of asr is exactly halfway between the dhuhr and the maghrib. For instance, if the noon is at 12:05 and the sun sets at 18:11, asr will begin at exactly 15:08. This is obtained by adding half of 6 hrs and 6 minutes, i.e., 3hrs and 3 minutes to dhuhr time.

3. Times of Work and of Repose

The night is the time for repose, while daytime is to work and earn a living. One of the related verses is as follows:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُاللَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُواْ فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَلآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ

"He is the One Who made you the night that you may rest therein, and has made the daytime illuminating. Verily in this are signs for those who listen." (Yunus/ Jonah 10:67)

Daytime is the time of livelihood[28]. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

وَجَعَلْنَا النَّهَارَ مَعَاشًا.

"And made the daytime for living." (An-Naba'/ The Great Tidings 78:11)

"duha =الضحى" is the light coming from the sun during the daytime. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

---

[28]If the infinitive meaning is given to Meash = مَعَاش, a noun phrase is formed by adding the word 'time' to it. As a noun Meash = مَعَاش also means the time. In both cases the meaning is 'time for living'.

“By the sun and its duha, and [by] the moon when it follows it, and [by] the daytime when it displays it, and [by] the night when it covers it.” (Ash-Shams/ The Sun 91:1-4)

Information on duha was given above. The verse, ‘Nor is the shade equivalent of the heat.’ shows that the basic difference between the light and duha, is the heat. It is for this reason that there is a temperature difference between the daytime and the night. During the white nights, the sun wandering in the sky gives light, but its heat is not felt like in the daytime. In Tromsø during the last week of June when the sun never sets, we could wander during the daytime with a short sleeved shirt whereas at night we had to wear additional underpants, thick socks, woolen sweaters, jacket, coat and our scarves before we went out for observations.

22 June 2011 Daytime 18.14 hrs

23 June 2011 Night 00.33 hrs

24 June 2011 Night 00.09 hrs

24 June 2011 night 01.31 hrs

In Arabic, the light that facilitates the act of seeing, is called noor[29]. On the other hand, duha only exists in daytime. By taking an oath on duha[30], Allah emphasizes its importance. It is the presence of duha that makes the daytime, a time for living and it is the absence of duha that makes the night a time for repose. When duha exits our neighborhood, a time window evolves that is convenient to repose. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

وجعل الليل سكنا

“…(Allah Who) has made the night sakan (for a repose).” (Al-An’am/ The Cattle 6:96)

“Sakan = سكن”, is the calmness after an action. At night, the movements retard and things calm down. The night wrapping the duha is like the shades wrapping the duha in Sayyidina Adam’s garden. In other words the night is a shade. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

“Have you not considered your Lord - how He extends the shadow, and if He commanded, He could have made it stationary? Then We made the sun for it an indication. Then We withdraw the shade unto us gradually. And He it is who made the night a covering for you and the sleep a repose and made the daytime for spreading across (the earth).” (Al-Furqan/ The Criterion 25:45-47)

As the night is illuminated somewhat through the light coming from the moon and the stars, illumination during the white nights is just like the illumination in the shade; it does not bother the person.

---

[29]Mufradat, Art.نور

[30]Surah Ad-Duha 93:1

4. Times of Worship

There are prescribed prayers for all sections of the night and the daytime. Allah Almighty ordains as follows:

فَاصْبِرْ عَلى مَا يَقُولُونَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ قَبْلَ طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ وَقَبْلَ غُرُوبِهَا وَمِنْ اٰنَائِ الَّيْلِ فَسَبِّحْ وَاَطْرَافَ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضى.

"Hence, bear patiently with whatever they may say, and worship your Lord before the rising of the sun and before its setting for making everything so beautiful; and, worship Him too during the times of the night as well as during the divisions of the daytime, so that you may be pleased." (Ta-Ha 20:130).

Let us try to understand the verse in parts:

1. *Before the sunrise:* The maghrib, the isha' and the fajr prayers.

2. *Before the sunset:* Dhuhr and asr prayers

As will be seen below, these are obligatory prayers. Remainder of the verse informs us about the times of optional (nafilah) prayers.

3. *Times of the night*: There are at least three nafilah prayers that are performed together with the maghrib, isha' and fajr prayers. Because the word "ana'= آناى" which we have translated as 'times', is the plural of "an=آن". In Arabic, plural form indicates at least three. However due to the following verse, the number of nafilah prayers becomes four with the addition of tahajjud prayer.

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِنَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَى أَن يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

"And wake up for prayer in some part of the night as an additional obligation for you: It may be that your Lord will raise you to a station of praise and glory!"

(Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17:79)

This additional duty is given to our Prophet. However this prayer is also important for us. It is narrated that Nabiy (p.b.u.h.) had said:

أَفْضَلُ اَلصَّلَاةِ بَعْدَ اَلْفَرِيضَةِ صَلَاةُ اَللَّيْلِ

"After the obligatory (fard) prayers most virtuous prayer is that of tahajjud[31]*."*

4. *Divisions of the daytime:*

فَسَبِّحْ وَاَطْرَافَ النَّهَارِ لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضى.

" ……worship Him during the divisions of the daytime, so that you may be pleased." (Ta-Ha 20:130).

[31] Muslim, Siyam 38-(1163)

The word "atraf = اَطْرَافَ", which we translated as divisions, is the plural of "taraf = طرف". In Arabic, plural indicates three or more. The first division of the daytime 'the midmorning', is incorporated into the times of prayer by means of this verse. By adding the dhuhr and the asr, the times of prayers become three. If we consider the word "atraf" to indicate more than three, it can be taken to indicate the nafilah prayers performed with the dhuhr and asr prayers. Abu Hurairah was reported to have said:

"My friend Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) has bequeathed me three things: Fasting three days per month, to offer two rakas of duha (midmorning) prayer and to pray witr before going to bed[32]".

Hence the times of nafilah prayers become eight, with four during the daytime and four during the night. Daytime prayers are: mid-morning, nafilah prayers before and after the dhuhr prayer, nafilah prayer before the asr prayer. Night time prayers are the nafilah prayers after the maghrib and isha', tahajjud prayers and the nafilah prayer before the fajr prayer.

The verse ends with the following words 'لَعَلَّكَ تَرْضٰى = so that you might be pleased.' The wife of the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) Ummu Habiba reported from him: *"If a Muslim prays 12 rakahs of prayers in addition to the obligatory prayers, Allah will build him/her a house in Jannah.[33]"*

---

[32]Bukhari, Tahajjud 35; Muslim, Musafereen 85 – (721)

[32] عن أبي هريرة، قال: أوصاني خليلي صلى الله عليه وسلم بثلاث: «بصيام ثلاثة أيام من كل شهر، وركعتي الضحى، وأن أوتر قبل أن أرقد» .

[33] Muslim, salat al-musafereen and qasruha 103- (728)

[33] عَنْ أُمِّ حَبِيبَةَ، زَوْجِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، يَقُولُ: «مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ مُسْلِمٍ يُصَلِّي لِلَّهِ كُلَّ يَوْمٍ ثِنْتَيْ عَشْرَةَ رَكْعَةً تَطَوُّعًا، غَيْرَ فَرِيضَةٍ، إِلَّا بَنَى اللهُ لَهُ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ »

II. PRAYER TIMES

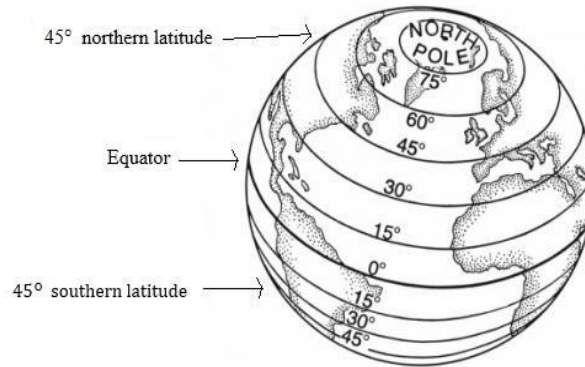
Prayer (salat) is an obligatory worship at specific times. It cannot be performed out of its time neither in case of war, nor fear, or any other causes.[34] Because Allah Almighty commands:

إِنَّ الصَّلاَةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوتًا

"The prayer has been decreed upon the believers at stated times."

(An-Nisa/ The Women 4:103)

Fasting is similarly fard on specific times.

The earth is divided into four regions by means of prayer. The first and the fourth regions are the two ends of the earth, namely northern and southern poles. This is a 90° region in total, bordered by the latitudes ± 45° and ± 90°. The area in the middle is again a 90° region. It is the sum of second and third regions from ± 45° northern latitudes of the Equator to ± 45° southern latitudes of the Equator. In the middle area, daytime is sunny and night is dark. At the poles, night is partially or completely bright or sunny in the summer, whereas daytime is partially or completely sunless.

The word 'sun' is mentioned only in the following verse about fard (obligatory) prayers:

أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا

"Keep up the prayer from the westwards decline of the sun…"

(Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17:78)

This verse explains that the time for the first prayer of the day, i.e., the dhuhr prayer begins when the sun crosses the meridian. Crossing the meridian is the starting point of calculations since it can easily be detected everywhere, including the poles.

Firstly, we will verify the measures for the middle area between 45° north and south latitudes where the prayer times can be observed. Then, we will examine how these measures can be applied for the poles, i.e. the tropic of salat.

A. DHUHR AND ASR PRAYERS

Performing two prayers in the daytime is obligatory. The Glorified Allah commands:

...وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ

"And keep up prayer in the two divisions of the daytime...." (Hud 11:114)

In Arabic, Taraf (طرف), means 'one of the divisions of something' and 'one division of something'[34]. 'The *tarafayn* of the daytime' is two divisions of it. As seen above, the daytime has three divisions. The first one begins with the sunrise, the second one with the movement of the sun towards the west from its zenith, and the third one in the middle of dhuhr and maghrib.

The following verse informs us that the first prayer of the daytime begins with the sun crossing the meridian:

أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ ...

"Keep up prayer from dulooki ashshams (westwards decline of sun)..."

(Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17/78)

'Delk = دَلْكْ'; means scraping and rubbing something by hand. The dulook of the sun is its slide from the zenith towards west, just like the hand's slide over the place that is rubbed. It is the time of zawal[35]. Imam Shaafi and Malikis had also confirmed this[36].

'Dulooki alshshams (=دلوك الشمس)' was also named as 'sunset'[37] because the sunset is the slide of the sun below the horizon. This meaning is incorrect from the point of the Qur'an and Sunnah unison as well as inner unison of Qur'an, even though it is literally proper. The command "*...keep up prayer in the two divisions of the daytime..."* (Hud, 11/114) mentions the two obligatory prayers of the daytime, and the verse above states the time for the first prayer of the daytime. The practice of our Prophet (p.b.u.h.) also supports that it is the dhuhr prayer.
Abu Said Ar-Rakkashi tells: *'I asked Anas B. Malik how the (prayer) time of the nabiy (p.b.u.h.) was. He said:*

كان يصلي الظهر عند دلوك الشمس

"He used to perform the dhuhr prayer at dulooki ashshams..."[38]

Then, no other opinion on this issue is acceptable.

---

[34] Lisan al-Arab, طرف Art.

[35] Lisan al-Arab (دَلَكَت الشّمسُ: زالت)

[36] Imam Shaafi (d. 204 h.), al-Umm, Beirut, 1990/1410, v. I, p. 86; Al-Qarafi, Ahmad b. Idris b. Abdulrahman, (d. 684 h.), az-Zahira, tahqiq; Muhammad Hajj, v. II, p. 9.

[37] Al-Sihah, Makayis, Lisan al-Arab, Kamus

[38] Muhammad b. Ismail el-Bukhari (d. 256 h.), at-Tarih al-Kabir, tahqiq, Mustafa Abdulqadir Ahmad, Beirut 1422 h. 2001 mx Hadith No; 1948; ad-Diya al-Maqdisi (d. 643 h.), tahqiq, Abdulmalik Duhaysh, Saudi Arabia, w/o date, Hadith no; 1450. Aby Ya'la al-Mawsili (d. 307 h.) Tahqiq, Hussain Salim Asad, Musnad, Damascus – Beirut 1412/1992, hadith no; 4004.

The beginning time of asr prayer is not mentioned in Qur’an. Since each division of a thing can be called ‘taraf’ (طرف) in Arabic, the second division in the verse “...the two divisions of the daytime...= طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ” may begin right after the dhuhr prayer, too. The dulook, westwards decline, of the sun continues up to the maghrib prayer, allowing these two prayers to be performed at the asr time, too. Therefore, our Prophet (p.b.u.h.) had performed the dhuhr and the asr prayers, joining them sometimes at the dhuhr or asr times.

Abdullah B. Abbas (r.a.) said: “*The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) had joined the dhuhr and the asr prayers in Madinah, as there was neither fear nor rain.”*[39]

But, there is also an intrinsic time of asr prayer. The Prophet (p.b.u.h.) frequently used to perform this prayer at that time. He enjoins as follows about it:

“Gabriel (p.b.u.h.) led me twice in [five] prayers, in the vicinity of the Bayet Allah (Ka’bah). On the first day, Gabriel offered Dhuhr prayers at the time when the shadows of things are no longer than a shoe lace. Then he offered Asr prayer at the time when the shadows of things stretch in length to match the height of the thing.... On the second day Gabriel offered Dhuhr prayer when the shadows of things lengthen to equal to the actual height of things - at the same time, when he had offered the Asr prayer the previous day. Then he offered Asr prayer at the time when the shadows of things were twice the length of the thing itself...

Then turning to me he said: “Muhammad, this is the time of prayers of the prophets before you. Within the two time limits set forth [during the two days] is the prescribed time for each prayer”.[40]

The shadow when the sun is at its zenith is called ‘fay zawal’. After fay zawal, when the shadow of everything is as long as itself, the asr time begins. According to our observations, this coincides with the half of the duration between the sun reaching the zenith and the sunset.

In other hadiths, the start time of asr prayer is not clearly stated. Abdullah B. Amr narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: *“The time for Dhuhr prayer is until asr comes, and the time for asr prayer is until the sun turns yellow.”* [41]

Abu Musa narrates this from the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.): *“A man came to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) asking him about the times of prayer, and he did not answer him... He told Bilal to say the Iqamah for Dhuhr when the sun had passed its zenith and a person would say: ‘It is the middle of the day,’ but he (the Prophet (p.b.u.h.)) knew better. Then he told him to say the Iqamah for Asr when the sun was still high...Then the next day he delayed Dhuhr until it was nearly the time of Asr compared to the day before. Then he delayed Asr, to a time such that*

---

[39] Muslim, salat al-musafereen and qasriha, al-jam al- bayn as-salatayn fi’l-hadar 54- (705)
«جَمَعَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنَ الظُّهْرِ وَالْعَصْرِ، وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَالْعِشَاءِ بِالْمَدِينَةِ، فِي غَيْرِ خَوْفٍ، وَلَا مَطَرٍ»

[40] Sunan Abu Dawood, Salat 393, Tirmidhi, Mawakit, 1

[41] Muslim, al-Masajid and mawadi as-salah, 171 – (612)
حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو غَسَّانَ الْمِسْمَعِيُّ، وَمُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْمُثَنَّى، قَالَا: حَدَّثَنَا مُعَاذٌ وَهُوَ ابْنُ هِشَامٍ، حَدَّثَنِي أَبِي، عَنْ قَتَادَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي أَيُّوبَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو، أَنَّ نَبِيَّ اللهِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، قَالَ: «إِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْفَجْرَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتٌ إِلَى أَنْ يَطْلُعَ قَرْنُ الشَّمْسِ الْأَوَّلُ، ثُمَّ إِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الظُّهْرَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتٌ إِلَى أَنْ يَحْضُرَ الْعَصْرُ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْعَصْرَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتٌ إِلَى أَنْ تَصْفَرَّ الشَّمْسُ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْمَغْرِبَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتٌ إِلَى أَنْ يَسْقُطَ الشَّفَقُ، فَإِذَا صَلَّيْتُمُ الْعِشَاءَ فَإِنَّهُ وَقْتٌ إِلَى نِصْفِ اللَّيْلِ»

when he finished, one would say: 'The sun has turned red.' ...Then he said: 'The time (for prayer) is between these times.''[42]

B. MAGHRIB AND ISHA' PRAYERS

Night is the period between the sunset and the sunrise. The Glorified Allah commands as follows about the prayers to be performed at night:

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ...وزُلَفًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ

"... keep up prayer at the zulaf of the night..." (Hud, 11/114)

Zulaf (زلف), is the plural form of zulfa (زلفة) which means nearness. "زُلَفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْل = zulaf of night" means the divisions of it that are nearer the daytime. Nearness is when the brightness of daytime and the darkness of night are mixed. It is called the twilight. In Arabic, plural form indicates at least three things. Therefore, twilights cannot be less than three. The first twilight beginning with the sunset, ends by the end of first shafaq and the second twilight begins. It lasts until the weather gets pitch-dark. Then comes the time for sleep and rest: the night. Another twilight, similar to the evening's, occurs towards the end of the night. The first division of it is called 'sahar'. It is also called 'fajr al-kazib: the false fajr' since it is usually mistaken for the fajr prayer time. The last twilight of the night is between the beginning of 'fajr-as sadiq: the true fajr' and the sunrise.

Since the twilight of fajr al-kazib is incorporated into the midnight, the count reduces to three. They are the prayer times for maghrib, isha' and fajr prayers, respectively. The middle of the night is tahajjud time. The illumination of the horizon at fajr al-kazib is like it is at the isha' time. And the illumination of the horizon between fajr as-sadiq and the sunrise, is similar to the maghrib twilight.[43]

---

[42] Muslim, Masajid 178, (614); Abu Dawood, Salat 2, (395); Nasai, Muwakit 15, (1, 260, 261). The text belongs to Muslim.
ثُمَّ أَمَرَهُ فَأَقَامَ بِالظُّهْرِ حِينَ زَالَتِ ...حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي مُوسَى عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ صَلَّى اللَّهم عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنَّهُ أَتَاهُ سَائِلٌ يَسْأَلُهُ عَنْ مَوَاقِيتِ الصَّلَاةِ فَلَمْ يَرُدَّ عَلَيْهِ
ثُمَّ أَخَّرَ الظُّهْرَ حَتَّى كَانَ قَرِيبًا مِنْ وَقْتِ الْعَصْرِ بِالْأَمْسِ ثُمَّ أَخَّرَ ...الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَائِلُ يَقُولُ قَدِ انْتَصَفَ النَّهَارُ وَهُوَ كَانَ أَعْلَمَ مِنْهُمْ ثُمَّ أَمَرَهُ فَأَقَامَ بِالْعَصْرِ وَالشَّمْسُ مُرْتَفِعَةٌ
فَدَعَا السَّائِلَ فَقَالَ الْوَقْتُ بَيْنَ هَذَيْنِ ...الْعَصْرَ حَتَّى انْصَرَفَ مِنْهَا وَالْقَائِلُ يَقُولُ قَدِ احْمَرَّتِ الشَّمْسُ

[43] Tahawi gives details of the matter and says:
"Redness emerges before fajr, then comes the whiteness of fajr. Redness and whiteness is the time for a single prayer, which is the fajr prayer. When these lights disappear, the time of the prayer ends. Therefore, the same lights, redness and whiteness, that appear in the evening are the time of a single prayer, which is maghrib prayer. When these lights disappear, the time of the prayer ends. According to the narration from Abu Hurairah, The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) said: "There is a beginning and end time for each prayer. The beginning of isha' is when the horizon disappears and the end of isha' is the middle of the night."
Abu Jafar Ahmad b. Muhammad at-Tahawi (d. 321 h.) Sharh al-Meani'l-asar, tahqiq: Muhammad Zahri an-Najjar and Muhammad Sayyid Jad al-Haq, Redactor and enumerator of babs and hadiths: DR. Yusuf Abdulrahman al-Mar'ashli, 1414/1994, v I, p. 155.
The hadith narrated from Abu Hurairah is mentioned in the following resources, too: Tirmidhi, I/283 No 151, Ahmad b. Hanbal II/232, no 7172, Ibn Abi Shayba I/281, Bayhaki, Marifat as-sunan wa'l-asar II/220, Bayhaki as-Sunan al-Kubra I/376
فَالنَّظَرُ فَنَظَرْنَا فِي ذَلِكَ فَرَأَيْنَا الْفَجْرَ يَكُونُ قَبْلَهُ حُمْرَةٌ ثُمَّ يَتْلُوهَا بَيَاضُ الْفَجْرِ فَكَانَتْ الْحُمْرَةُ وَالْبَيَاضُ فِي ذَلِكَ وَقْتًا لِصَلَاةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ ، وَهُوَ الْفَجْرُ فَإِذَا خَرَجَا، خَرَجَ وَقْتُهَا .
عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ أَنْ يَكُونَ الْبَيَاضُ وَالْحُمْرَةُ فِي الْمَغْرِبِ أَيْضًا وَقْتًا لِصَلَاةٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَحُكْمُهُمَا حُكْمٌ وَاحِدٌ إِذَا خَرَجَا ، خَرَجَ وَقْتَا الصَّلَاةِ اللَّذَانِ هُمَا وَقْتٌ لَهَا .
....رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ : قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ { إِنَّ لِلصَّلَاةِ أَوَّلًا وَآخِرًا ، وَإِنَّ أَوَّلَ وَقْتِ الْعِشَاءِ حِينَ يَغِيبُ الْأُفُقُ ، وَإِنَّ آخِرَ وَقْتِهَا حِينَ يَنْتَصِفُ اللَّيْلُ ،

*

*

End of First Shafaq (Süleymaniye, İstanbul) *Beginning of Fajr As-Sadiq (Süleymaniye, İstanbul)*

The red and white lights from the sun, mix with the darkness of the night at maghrib prayer time. Later on, these lights group up and create red or white bands of light expanding horizontally. The white band emerges at the top and the red band in the middle. The end of maghrib prayer time comes when a black band finally emerges at the bottom.

The brightest stars start to be apparent when the sun is 6° below the horizon. This is called 'civil twilight'. Rafi b. Hadeej narrated: *"When we performed the maghrib prayer together with the Messenger of Allah, one could clearly see where his arrow would strike, after the prayer.[44] Hurry up and perform the maghrib prayer before the star rises.[45]"*

The time of isha' begins when the lights mixing into the darkness of the night, scatter away, as well as the black, red and white light bands. It is similar to fajr as-sadiq. The sun is 8.5° below the horizon at this time. The weather gets darker, and stars begin grouping up. Nabiy (p.b.u.h.) said: *"My ummah will accord with fitra as long as they perform the maghrib prayer before the stars group up."[46]*

*

*

Beginning of Isha'
West of Süleymaniye Mosque (İstanbul)

End of Fajr Al-Kazib (False Fajr)
East of Süleymaniye Mosque (İstanbul)

---

[44] Bukhari, Muslim
وعنْ رافعِ بن خديج رضي الله عنه قالَ: كُنّا نُصَلي المغْربَ معَ رسول الله صَلّى الله عَلَيْهِ وَسَلّم فيَنْصرفُ أحدُنا وإنه لَيُبصرُ مَوَاقعَ نَبْلِهِ. متفق عليه.

[45] Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241 h.), Musnad, Tahqiq Shuayb al-Arnaut, Adil Murshid and others, Muesseset al-risale, 2001 m. 1421 h. V. XXXVIII, p. 503.

[46] Abu Dawood,Salat 6; Ibn Majah, Salat 7; Ahmad b. Hanbal, 4/147,4/117, 422
وعن عقبة بن عامر: "أن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم قال: لا تزال أمتي بخير أو على الفطرة ما لم يؤخروا المغرب حتى تشتبك النجوم" .

When Abdullah b. Omar was asked about ‘shafaq’, he said: “It is the disappearance of whiteness”, and when asked about ‘ghasaq’, he said: “It is the disappearance of redness”[47]. These are correct identifications. The disappearance of the white band means that it mixes into the red lights on the horizon. This should be the disappearance of white band stipulated by Abu Hanifah for the beginning of isha’ time. In the meantime, the redness on the horizon disperses along it and it does not disappear until the weather gets fairly dark. Only very careful observers can tell this.

The words of Tabari are also important. According to him, the scholars of exegesis (tafsir) disagree about ‘shafaq’. Some of them tell it is the redness, whereas the others tell that both redness and whiteness are called shafaq[48]. According to Abu Hurairah and Omar B. Abdulaziz also, shafaq is the whiteness[49].

The whiteness mentioned here is the white band seen above the red band in the photos above. When the following hadith of Nabiy (p.b.u.h.) is combined with his hadith about the fajr prayer, the correctness of the information above is revealed:

“The time for the maghrib prayer is till the shafaq disappears.[50]”

Because, the white light band disappears, when the red band disperses.

The time of isha’ ends if the horizon gets completely dark and the smallest stars become visible. According to all observations we made until now, this time is when the sun goes 17° below the horizon. The first shafaq is the time for maghrib and the second one is for isha’. Great scholars of madhabs agree upon this. Sarakhsi of Hanafis says:

“Every day three rises and sets occur. The second rise, i.e., the second fajr amongst the rises, and the second set, i.e., the set of redness among the sets are taken as the basis. The time of isha’ begins when the redness sets, i.e., disappears.”[51]

Al Mawardi from Shaafis and Ahmad b. Ganim b. Salim from Malikis, say:

---

[47] Abu Muhammad Abdullah b. Vahb b. Muslim al-Misri el-Qurashee (d. 197 h.) Tahk. Mayklosh Morani (ميكلوش موراني) Dar al-gharb al-Islami, v. I, p. 63.
قَالَ: وَحَدَّثَنَا الْقَاسِمُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ دِينَارٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عُمَرَ أَنَّهُ سُئِلَ عَنِ {الشَّفَقِ} ، فَقَالَ: ذهاب البياض، وسئل عن الـ {غسق} ، فَقَالَ: ذَهَابُ الْحُمْرَةِ.

[48] Tabari, Muhammad b. Jereer, Jami al-bayan fi tafsir al-Qur’an, tahqiq Ahmad Muhammad Shakir, v. XXIV, p. 318, Beirut 1420/2000.
وقال آخرون: الشفق: هو وقال آخرون: هو النهار .اختلف أهل التأويل في ذلك، فقال بعضهم: هو الحمرة كما قلنا، وممن قال ذلك جماعة من أهل العراق والشفق: والصواب من القول في ذلك عندي أن يقال: إن الله أقسم بالنهار مدبرا، والليل مقبلا. وأما الشفق الذي تَحُلّ به صلاة .اسم للحمرة والبياض، وقالوا: هو من الأضداد العشاء، فإنه للحمرة عندنا للعلة التي قد بيَّنّاها في كتابنا كتاب الصلاة.

[49] Abu Bakr Abdulrazzaq b. Humam b. Nafi al-Humayri al-Yemani es-San’ani (d. 211 h.), v. III, p. 408, Beirut 1419.
عَنْ مَعْمَرٍ , عَنِ ابْنِ خُثَيْمٍ , عَنِ ابْنِ لَهِيعَةَ , عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ , قَالَ: {الشَّفَقُ} : الْبَيَاضُ " عَنْ مَعْمَرٍ , عَنْ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ بُرْقَانَ , عَنْ عُمَرَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ , قَالَ: {الشَّفَقُ} : «الْبَيَاضُ» عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ رَاشِدٍ , أَنَّهُ سَمِعَ مَكْحُولًا , يَقُولُ: {الشَّفَقُ} : «الْحُمْرَةُ»

[50] Muslim, Masajid 173 – (612)
.ووقتُ صلاةِ المَغْرِبِ مَا لَمْ يغب الشّفقُ،" رواه مسلم...عَنْ عبدِ الله بن عَمْرو رضي الله عنهما، أَنَّ النبي صَلّى الله عَلَيْهِ وَسَلّم قالَ: "

[51] Shamsaddin Muhammad b. Ahmed As-Sarakhsi, (d. 483 h.), Al-Mabsut, Beirut, 1414/1993, v. I, p. 145.
أَنَّ الطَّوَالِعَ ثَلَاثَةٌ وَالْغَوَارِبَ ثَلَاثَةٌ ثُمَّ الْمُعْتَبَرُ لِدُخُولِ الْوَقْتِ الْوَسَطُ مِنْ الطَّوَالِعِ وَهُوَ الْفَجْرُ الثَّانِي فَكَذَلِكَ فِي الْغَوَارِبِ الْمُعْتَبَرُ لِدُخُولِ الْوَقْتِ الْوَسَطُ وَهُوَ الْحُمْرَةُ فَبِذَهَابِهَا يَدْخُلُ وَقْتُ الْعِشَاءِ

"Three rises are the rises of two fajrs and the sun. Three sets are the sets of the sun and two shafaq's. Since the fajr prayer is wajib by the second rise, i.e., fajr as-sadiq, the isha' prayer should be wajib by the second set, i.e., the set of redness"[52].

The disperse of the red band that emerges at the end of maghrib time, is counted as its set. Similarly, the transformation of the fajr al-kazib lights into the white and red light bands, is counted as its set and the rise of fajr as-sadiq. If this situation is not taken into account, the words of these scholars cannot be comprehended.

Since the midnight is not counted as over by fajr al-kazib, the nearer times of the night to the day, decrease to three. Then, the command: "*... keep up prayer at the zulaf of the night..."* (Hud, 11:114), expresses that maghrib, isha' and fajr prayers are obligatory (fard).

The following verse states the end of isha' time:

أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ ... إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ ...

"Keep up the prayer... till the ghasaq of the night..." (Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17:78)

Ghasaq is the darkness becoming denser[53], which is at the end of the second shafaq. Both, the verse above and this one express that the time of isha' ends by the darkening of western horizon.

The real meaning of ghasaq is chilliness. There are also two words from the same origin, ghasiq (الغاسق) and ghassaq (الغساق) in Qur'an. Zajjaj[54] said: "Al-ghasiq means cold and the night is called al-ghasiq because it is colder than the daytime[55]. The word الغَسّاق = al-ghassaq from the same root expresses exaggeration and therefore it is called 'blackfrost' (الزمهرير = az-zamhareer)[56]." The following verses prove that the Qur'an approves this meaning:

هَذَا وَإِنَّ لِلطَّاغِينَ لَشَرَّ مَآبٍ .جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا فَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ . هَذَا فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَغَسَّاقٌ . وَآخَرُ مِن شَكْلِهِ أَزْوَاجٌ

"There it is; indeed, for the transgressors is an evil future, Hell... across which they will burn. What an evil place to dwell! There it is; so let them taste what is very hot and ghassaq (very cold). Similarly, many other pairs of punishments." (Sad 38:55-58)

---

[52] Al-Mawardi, Abu al-Hasan Ali Ibn Muhammad Ibn Habib (d. 450 h.) Tahqiq; Ali Muhammad Muawwad, Adil Ahmad Abdulmawjud, al- Hawi al-Kabee fi Fiqh al-Imam ash-Shaafi, Beirut 1419/1999, v. II, p.24.
... وَلِأَنَّ الطَّوَالِعَ ثَلَاثَةٌ الْفَجْرَانِ، وَالشَّمْسُ، وَالْغَوَارِبُ ثَلَاثَةٌ الشَّفَقَانِ، وَالشَّمْسُ، فَلَمَّا وَجَبَتْ صَلَاةُ الصُّبْحِ بِالطَّالِعِ الْأَوْسَطِ وَهُوَ الْفَجْرُ الصَّادِقُ اقْتَضَى أَنْ تَجِبَ الْعِشَاءُ بِالْغَارِبِ الْأَوْسَطِ – وَهُوَ الشَّفَقُ الْأَحْمَرُ –
Ahmad b. Ganim b. Salim (d. 1126 h.), al-Fawakih ad-dawwani ala risalat Ibn Abee Zayd al- Kayrawani (Maliki), 1415/1995. v. I. p. 169.
قَالَ: «الشَّفَقُ الْحُمْرَةُ فَإِذَا غَابَ الشَّفَقُ وَجَبَتْ الصَّلَاةُ» وَأَيْضًا «الْغَوَارِبُ ثَلَاثَةٌ: أَنْوَارُ الشَّمْسِ وَالشَّفَقَانِ، وَالطَّوَالِعُ ثَلَاثَةٌ: الْفَجْرَانِ وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْحُكْمُ لِلْوَسَطِ فِي الطَّوَالِعِ وَالْغَوَارِبِ»

[53] Zamakhshari, op. cit., v. VII, p. 339.

[54] Ibrahim b. As-Sirri b. Sahl Abu Ishaq az-Zajjaj, d. 311 h.

[55] Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Al-Azhari, al-Harawi (d. 370 h.), Tahqiq Muhammad Iwaz Mur'ib (**محمد عوض مرعب**), v. VIII, p. 31-31. Beirut, 2001,

[56] In the interpretation of Tabari, it is mentioned that the word also means 'pus discharging from the wounds of dwellers of Hell'. However, Tabari prefers the meaning blackfrost.

The expression "many other pairs of punishment" means that hameem = حَمِيم and ghassaq = غَسَّاقٌ are related punishments. Hameem means very hot; that burns. Since very cold also burns, ghassaq should be given the meaning 'very cold'. Ibn Abbas said for the ghassaq =غَسَّاقٌ : "It is so cold that it burns"[57]. One verse is as follows:

لَّا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا . إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَغَسَّاقًا .

"They will not taste therein any coolness or a drink. Except what is very hot and very cold."
(An-Naba'/ The Great Tidings 78:24-25)

Since chilliness and cold are pointed out, ghasaq al-layl = غَسَق اللَّيْلِ is the end of isha', and the time when the chilliness of the night starts at white nights. These are the points to be discovered by physicists about the white nights.

It is important that Abdullah b. Omar calls shafaq "the disappearance of whiteness", and ghasaq "the disappearance of redness"[58]. There remains no brightness on the horizon after ghasaq. Imam Shaafi and Malikis also state the same.[59]

The Messenger of Allah said:

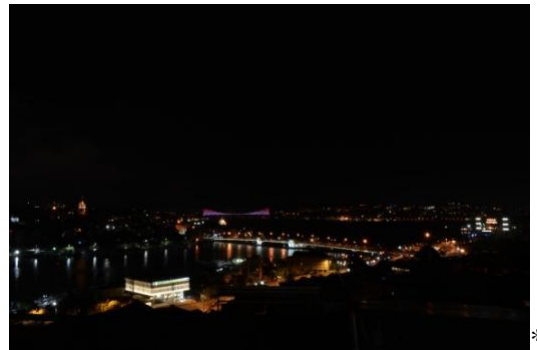
"*'Gabriel (p.b.u.h.) led me twice in [five] prayers, in the vicinity of the Bayet-Allah. On the first day... he offered maghrib prayers at the time when the sun falls [below the horizon]: the time when a person ends his fast. Then he offered isha' prayers at the end of (first) dusk...*

On the second occasion, Gabriel offered... maghrib prayers at the same time as he had offered these prayers on the first day. Then he offered isha' prayer when ***one-third of the night had expired*** **(**حِينَ ذَهَبَ ثُلُثُ اللَّيْلِ**)....**[60]"

Nowadays, isha' adhan is recited at ghasaq al-layl, which is actually the end of isha' time, since its true conditions are not complied. Fajr prayer adhan is also recited at the beginning of fajr al-kazib.

*

Isha' time according to Diyanet

*

Fajr time according to Diyanet

The photos above do not illustrate the isha' or fajr time, but the time of ghasaq.

[57] Alauddin Ali b. Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. Umar ash-Shaykh al-Hazin, (d. 741 h.), Tahqiq Tashi Muhammad Ali Shakhin, Beirut, 1415 h. V. IV, p. 45.(45/4)

[58] Abu Muhammad Abdullah b. Wahb, op. cit. , v. I, p. 63.

[59] Imam Shaafi (d. 204 h.), al-Umm, Beirut, 1990/1410, v. I, p. 86; Al-Qarafi, Ahmad b. Idris b. Abdulrahman, (d. 684 h.), az-Zahira, tahqiq; Muhammad Hajj, v. II, p. 9.

[60] Sunan Abu Dawood Salat 393, Tirmidhi, Mawakit, 1

The hadiths which inform that isha' prayer is performed at the first third of the night are as follows:

"The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) delayed isha' prayer one night, and Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, called out to him: 'The women and children have gone to sleep.' The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) came out and said: 'No one is waiting for it except you.' According to Aisha, at that time no prayer was offered except in Al-Madinah. They used to pray the isha' between the time when the twilight disappeared and when one-third of the night has passed.[61] "

Abdullah B. Umar said: *"We stayed in the Masjid one night waiting for the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) to pray Isha'. He came out to us when one-third of the night or more had passed, and he said when he came out: 'Are you waiting for this prayer? Were it not that I would impose too much difficulty on my Ummah, I would have led them in the prayer at this time.' Then he commanded the Muadhdhin to say the Iqamah and he prayed.[62]*

A man came to the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) asking him about the times of prayer, and he did not answer him. He told Bilal to say the Iqamah ... for Maghrib when the sun had set. Then he told him to say the Iqamah for Isha' when the twilight had disappeared. Then the next day ... he delayed Maghrib until the twilight was about to disappear. Then he delayed isha' until one-third of the night had passed. Then he said: 'The time (for prayer) is between these times.'[63] "

Abu Said Al-Khudri said: *"Once we would offer the isha' prayer with the Prophet (p.b.u.h.). But He did not come out till it was midnight or about midnight. When he came out he said: "Do not leave your places!", so we waited. Later on he said: "All the people prayed and then slept and you had been in prayer as long as you were waiting for it. I would delay this prayer till the middle of the night if it were not for the sickness of the sick and the weakness of the weak."[64] "*

Narrated by Anas b. Malik: *"One day, the Messenger of Allah delayed the isha' prayer until the midnight and then prayed. Then he turned his face to us after he had prayed and said, 'The people have prayed and gone to sleep, but you were as if you were in prayer the whole time you were waiting for it.[65] "*

"The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) delayed ***al-atamah*** *until the darkness one night, and Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, called out to him: 'The women and children have gone to sleep.' The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) came out and said: 'No one has waited for this prayer except you.'* [66]

The 'midnight' mentioned in these hadiths is the time beginning with darkening of the western horizon completely.

---

[61] Bukhari, Mawakit as-salat 24.
وَلاَ يُصَلَّى يَوْمَئِذٍ إِلَّا بِالْمَدِينَةِ، وَكَانُوا يُصَلُّونَ فِيمَا بَيْنَ أَنْ يَغِيبَ الشَّفَقُ إِلَى ثُلُثِ اللَّيْلِ الأَوَّلِ
[62] Abu Dawood, Salat 7, hadith no 420.
[63] Muslim, Masajid 178- (614)
[64] Abu Dawood Salat, hadith no, 422.
[65] Bukhari, Mawakit 25.
[66] Muslim, Masajid 218 - (638).

The beginning time of isha' is not explicitly mentioned in Qur'an. Considering the verse : **"And keep up prayer ... in the hours of the night that are nearer (the day)."** (Hud 11:114), the nearest prayer to the daytime is maghrib prayer after sunset. The second near time to the daytime is the one beginning after that. Therefore, the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) had joined maghrib and isha' prayers without the reasons of travel or fear.[67] But he usually performed the maghrib prayer at the first shafaq and the isha' prayer at the second.

According to the great scholars of four madhabs, the time of isha' lasts until the darkness of the night.

As-Sarakhsi from Hanafis says: *"Imam Muhammad said in Al-Kitab that time of isha' is until the midnight (completely darkening of the western horizon).*[68].

Imam Shaafi said: *"The end of isha' is until the one-third of the night has passed. When this division of the night ends, the time of the prayer also ends. All of the narrations from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) prove that the time ends after that*[69]*."* According to what his son Abu'l Fadl informs, Ahmad B. Hanbal said: *"Isha' begins when shafaq disappears. The ending time is one-third or middle of the night according to different authorities*[70]*."*

"Middle of the night, i.e., midnight" and "one-third of the night", i.e., "first third of the night" mean the same.

Ibn'ul Qasim said: *"We said to Malik: "They delay the prayer until the one-third of the night". He condemned this and as if he said: "They should pray it the way the people do." It seemed he admired what the people did. They pray the isha' a short while after the disappearance of red shafaq. He said: "The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.), Abu Bakr and Umar did not delay it so much."* [71]*"*

Subsequent Shaafi and Hanbali scholars, based on the following irrelevant hadith, gave a fatwa that the isha' prayer can be performed until the beginning of the fajr prayer: *"As Abu Qatadah narrated, The Messenger of Allah traveled on his mount from night to sahar. He got off at sahar time and lay down, so did his companions. He woke up when the sun stroke his back and they offered the prayer after traveling for a while. When they set off having performed the dhuhr prayer, ashab whispered to each other about the consequences of their fault about fajr prayer. Prophet (p.b.u.h.) said: "Am I not your model? There is no mistake while asleep. The fault is delaying that prayer until the next prayer time. Should anyone finds himself in such a situation, let him offer the prayer whenever he wakes up, and offer it in exact time the next day."*[72] *"*

[67] Muslim, Salat al-musafereen, 49- (705)
[68] Shamsaddin Muhammad b. Ahmed As-Sarakhsi, (d. 483 h.), Al-Mabsut, Egypt 1324/1906, v. I, p. 259.

[69] Shaafi, Muhammad b. Idris, al-Umm, Beirut 1393/1973, v. I, p. 74
[70] Ahmad b. Hanbal, Masail al-Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241h.) (narration by his son Abi'l Fadl Salih (203/266 h.) India, v. II, p. 174.
[71] Malik b. Anas (d.179 h.), al-Mudawwana, Dar al-kutub al-ilmiyya, 1415 /1994 v. I, p. 156.
[72] Muslim, Masajid 311 – (681).
قَالَ أَمَا إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ فِي النَّوْمِ تَفْرِيطٌ إِنَّمَا التَّفْرِيطُ عَلَى مَنْ لَمْ يُصَلِّ الصَّلَاةَ حَتَّى يَجِيءَ وَقْتُ الصَّلَاةِ الْأُخْرَى

The part of the hadith taken as evidence is:

‘The fault is delaying that prayer until the next prayer time.’[73]

This hadith points out that the fajr prayer they could not perform because of sleeping, should be performed before the dhuhr time. The time of isha’ cannot be lengthened until the fajr prayer based on this. If the expressions of these scholars were right, they should have given fatwa to lengthen the fajr prayer until dhuhr time, first. None of them said that.

Hanafis lengthen the time of isha’ until the fajr, based on the following hadith which does not exist in any of hadith books:

“The end of isha’ is when fajr as-sadiq is born.[74]”

Mahmood B. Ahmad Al-Ayni (d. 855) from Hanafis says that:

“No hadith reached us with such expressions. It is frustrating that the people who expound the books base on this hadith and attribute it to Abu Hurairah. It does not exist.[75]”

C. DAWN (FAJR) PRAYER

There are many verses, hadiths and narrations from the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) that explain the fajr prayer. One of the verses is as follows:

أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا

“From the westwards decline of the sun till the darkness of the night, and during the accumulation of lights of dawn, keep up the prayer. The accumulation (of lights) of fajr is visible.” (Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17:78)

The important part of the verse is the Qur’an’al-Fajr (قرآن الفجر). The word qur’an (قرآن), means collection and accumulation.[76] If something is collected together, that is called qur’an. The last book of Allah is called Qur’an, because it’s the collection of the verses. This word is used in the Qur’an by this meaning in many verses.[77]

---

[73] Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Ali al-Haytami, Tuhfat al-muhtaj bi sharh al-minhaj, Egypt 1357/1983 h. v. I, p. 424; Shamsuddin Muhammad b. Abdullah az-Zarkashi from Hanbali madhab (d. 772 h.) Dar al-ubaykan, 1413/1993 Sharh az-Zarkashi ala muhtasar al- Haraki, v. I, p. 479.

[74] Sarakhsi, al-Mabsut, v. I, p. 145
وَآخِرُ وَقْتِ الْعِشَاءِ حِينَ يَطْلُعُ الْفَجْرُ

[75] Mahmud b. Ahmad al-Ayni, al-Binaya fi sharh al-Hidayat, Dar al-fikr 1980/1400, v. I, p. 808.

[76] قَرَأْتُ الشيء قرآنا, means: ‘I collected something and added the one to the other.’ قرأت الكتاب قراءة وقرآنا similarly means, ‘I read the book’. (Makayis al-lugha) Because, reading is adding one word to one another. The last book of Allah is called Qur’an since it collects the surahs together. (Lisan al-arab)

[77] Arabic linguist Abu Jafar an-Nahhas, Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Ismail (d. 338 h.) communicates the different opinions in his book I’rab al-Qur’an (Beirut 1421 v. II, p. 281) about قُرْآنَ الْفَجْ being used as mansoob:

قال الأخفش سعيد: نصب وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ بمعنى وآثر قرآن الفجر، وعليك قرآن الفجر. قال أبو إسحاق: التقدير: وأقم قرآن الفجر.

Ahfash Said (Abu'l-Hasan Said b. Mas'ade al-Mujashee al-Belh al-Ahfash al-Awsat (d. 215/830 [?]) DIA) said that قُرْآنَ الْفَجْر in the verse is mansoob because it means آثر قرآن الفجر = prefer the Qur’an at fajr, عليك قرآن الفجر care about the Qur’an at fajr. Abu Ishaq said it is because of its meaning أقم قرآن الفجر = keep up the Qur’an at fajr.

The interpretations we could find stick with these meanings. In our opinion, it is not correct to translate the verse with this meaning. Because, prayer is a kind of worship due at specific time windows (See An-Nisa 4:103). Those times are explained

Fajr, means slashing, shedding and eruption as infinitive.[78] As a noun, fajr means the redness that emerges at the eastern horizon in early hours of the morning, or the area where this redness emerges.[79] The red and the white lights that start to appear in the sky towards the end of the night descend to the horizon steadily, forming a thin dome of light. Colors begin to dissociate, and the horizon begins to clear up. Then, we observe that the fajr, i.e., the red lights arriving at the horizon group up along it and form a red band of light. Above it forms a white band of light. Since the earth is dark in the meantime, it seems like a black band of light expanding along the horizon. When these bands become prominent, **"quran of fajr becomes mashhood"**, i.e., **"the accumulation of fajr lights becomes visible"**. It is significant that the time of fajr prayer begins by the grouping of red light band at the eastern horizon. Because, the brightness that appears till then, is of sahar time's. Fajr prayer and fasting start times are not due by that. Since that brightness misleads the people, it is called fajr al-kazib, i.e., false fajr.

The following verse explains the true fajr - fajr as-sadiq, from another point of view:

وَالصُّبْحِ إِذَا أَسْفَرَ

"And by the redness when it brightens..." (Al-Muddathir/ The Cloaked One 74:34)

In Arabic, the expression asfara's subh = أَسْفَرَ الصبح, is used for the time when the eastern horizon is clear and doubtlessly enlightened[80]. When Allah swears upon something, that signifies its importance. Being the beginning of fajr prayer and fasting times, makes it important.

الصُّبْح= subh; in the verse means the redness. The dark redness in hair is called الصَّبَحُ = sabah[81]. The lion whose fur is red and white from birth is asbah = الأَصْبَحُ [82]. That time is called subh = الصُّبْح, since all of these refer to the horizontally spreading red light band, which is the sign of the morning[83]. The Messenger of Allah expresses this:

ليس الفجر المستطيل في الأفق ولكنه المعترض الأحمر

"*The fajr is not that which is vertical in the sky but it is that which is red and horizontal*[84]."

---

in two parts after the command " أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ = Perform the prayer". The first part is explained in the verse *" From the westwards decline of the sun till the darkness of the night…"*. At this section dhuhr, maghrib and isha' prayers are performed. The second section is 'Qur'an al-fajr = قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ''. 'Fi Qur'an al-fajr = في قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ' is time adverbial. When Fi في is ruled out, the word Qur'an which is majroor becomes mansoob. The ones who construe the verse as of above meaning also construed the word 'mash-hood' (مشهود) as 'the thing angels witness' and they cut off the relation between this part of the verse and the time of prayer. This meaning is appropriate by means of neither Arabic grammar, nor the integrity of content.

[78] Mufradat Art. فجْر

[79] Lisan al-arab Art. فجْر

[80] Lisan al-arab Art. سْفَر

[81] Makayis al-lugha

[82] Al- Qamus Al-muhit, I/227

[83] Halil b. Ahmad, al-Ayn

الفَجرُ: ضوءُ الصباحِ، والفَجرُ: الصُّبحُ

[84] Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241 h.), Musnad, V. IV, p. 23 and p. 33.

15699 - قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ جَابِرٍ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ النُّعْمَانِ عَنْ قَيْسِ بْنِ طَلْقٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَيْسَ الْفَجْرُ الْمُسْتَطِيلَ فِي الْأُفُقِ وَلَكِنَّهُ الْمُعْتَرِضُ الْأَحْمَرُ

Since the beginning of false fajr, there exist white and red lights on the horizon mixed into the darkness. Then, the redness starts to come into prominence.

 * * *

Stills of Fajr al-kazib (false fajr)

The following verse states clearly that the time of fajr is not due until the lights on the horizon form bands:

و كلوا واشربوا حتى يتبين لكم الخيط الأبيض من الخيط الأسود من الفجر

" Eat and drink, until the white streak of fajr (redness) appears to you distinct from its black streak." (Al-Baqarah/ The Cow 2:187)

Fajr as-sadiq (true fajr)

Colors decompose at fajr as-sadiq. The dense darkness remains on the land. The white light band above, and the red light band in the middle come into prominence. The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) said the following about this issue:

فَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَعْتَرِضَ لَكُمُ الْأَحْمَرُ...

"Eat and drink until the redness spreads horizontally according to you[85]."

... صَلَّى الْفَجْرَ حِينَ بَرَقَ الْفَجْرُ وَحَرُمَ الطَّعَامُ عَلَى الصَّائِمِ ...

"Gabriel (p.b.u.h.) led me in prayers, in the vicinity of the Bayet Allah... he offered Fajr prayer when the redness brightened: when a fasting person practices restraint from eating food[86]."

16334 - حدثنا عبد الله حدثني أبي ثنا موسى ثنا محمد بن جابر عن عبد الله بن النعمان عن قيس بن طلق عن أبيه أن النبي صلى الله عليه و سلم قال : ليس الفجر المستطيل في الأفق ولكنه المعترض الأحمر

[85] Abu Dawood Sawm, 17, Tirmidhi Sawm 15, Ahmad b. Hanbal 4/23.

Narrated by Semure b. Jundub: The Messenger of Allah said:

لَا يَغُرَّنَّكُمْ نِدَاءُ بِلَالٍ وَهَذَا الْبَيَاضُ حَتَّى يَنْفَجِرَ الْفَجْرُ، أَوْ يَطْلُعَ الْفَجْرُ.

"Let neither Bilal's call nor that whiteness mislead you. Let the redness erupt or let the redness rise[87]."

What is called 'that whiteness' by our Prophet (p.b.u.h.) is the brightness of the horizon that is observed until the clear appearance of the red light band, i.e., fajr al-kazib, the misleading redness. According to verses and hadiths, two fajrs occur every morning. The following expression of the Messenger of Allah eases to distinguish them:

"كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا يَهِيدَنَّكُمُ السَّاطِعُ الْمُصْعِدُ، فَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَعْتَرِضَ لَكُمُ الْأَحْمَرُ"

"Eat and drink; let the brightness ascending horizontally not prevent you; eat and drink until you see the redness spreading horizontally[88]."

As-sati' السَّاطِعُ; in the hadith is something that spreads and ascends such as lightning, dust, brightness and smell[89]; al-mus'id الْمُصْعِدُ is something that climbs[90]. That means, the first fajr is the brightness that spreads by climbing whereas the second fajr is the red group of light that separates the darkness from light horizontally. This is quite important. Otherwise, people mistake every brightness on the eastern horizon for fajr as-sadiq. Fajr as-sadiq, true fajr, is nothing but the red light of band that extends along the horizon. The following verse explains this disperse as well:

فَالِقُ الإِصْبَاحِ وَجَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ سَكَنًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ حُسْبَانًا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ

"[He is] the One Who splits the 'isbah' and Who has made the night for a repose and the sun and the moon proper for calculation. These are the measures set by The Exalted in Might, The All-Knowing. " (Al-An'am/ The Cattle 6:96)

---

[86] Tirmidhi, Mawakit, 1.
[87] Ahmad b Hanbal, Musnad (ar-Risalah edition) v. 33, p. 267, Hadith no, 20079.
[88] Abu Dawood, vakt as-sahoor, hadith no 2348; Sunan at-Tirmidhi, Ma Ja'e fi bayan al fajr, hadith no 705.
[89] Lisan al-Arab
[90] Ahmad b. Faris b. Zakariyya al-Qazvin ar-Radhi (d. 395h.) Makayis al-lugha; Tahqiq, Abdulsalam Muhammad Harun, Art. صعد. Dar al-fiqr, 1979/1399.

Al-isbah = الْإِصْباحِ means “prelude to sabah” and الصَّبَحُ = sabah means redness[91]. Faliq’ul-isbah = فالق الإصباح, is the red band that divides the red and white lights[92], which are mixed into the darkness on the horizon since the beginning of fajr al-kazib.

The darkness and the white light band are separated by the red light band at fajr as-sadiq.

One man asked the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) about the prayer times. He did not answer but wanted to teach it by practice. On the first day, he led the fajr prayer at its beginning time. Abu Musa Al-Ash’ari informs us:

فأَقامَ الفَجْرَ حين انشقَّ الفجْرُ، والنّاس لا يكادُ يعرفُ بعضُهُمْ بعْضاً.

“That day the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) led the fajr prayer when the fajr (redness) split. People would almost not recognize each other. (Muslim, Masajid 178 - 614)”

The expression: ‘People would almost not recognize each other’ means that they started to recognize each other by means of the spreading light.

The following hadith of Messenger of Allah, expresses the issue in other words:

... صَلَّى الْفَجْرَ حِينَ بَرَقَ الْفَجْرُ وَحَرُمَ الطَّعَامُ عَلَى الصَّائِمِ ...

“*Gabriel... offered Fajr prayer when the redness brightened: when a fasting person practices restraint from eating food.[93]”*

The following news also supports this situation:

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهم عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُصَلِّي الصُّبْحَ وَأَحَدُنَا يَعْرِفُ جَلِيسَهُ

Abu’l Minhal communicated the following from Abu Barza: *“When the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) led the fajr prayer, each of us could recognize who was sitting next.[94]”*

This means that the brightness emerging on the horizon, reached inside the masjid.

Abu Jafar At-Tahavi communicates the words of Ibrahim An-Nahai by saheeh chain of narrators:

“The companions of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) have not agreed upon anything else as firmly as they did on tanweer”[95]. Tanweer is the spreading of light that provides seeing[96].

[91] Makayis al-lugha Art. صبح .

[92] Ibrahim Mustafa, Ahmad az-Zayyat, Hamid Abdulqadir, Muhammad an-Naajjar, al-Mujam al-wasit, Art. صب . Dar ad-da’wa, v. I, p. 505.

[93] Tirmidhi, Mawakit, 1.

[94] Bukhari, Mawakit as-salah 11.

According to Hanafi madhab, fajr is the whiteness that spreads on the horizon[97]. In the mean time, the horizon becomes clearly visible[98].

Since this whiteness is above the red band, what they say does not contradict to common opinion.

Imam Malik answers a question as follows: *"I have been thinking this for a while: As whiteness rises before the fajr, but it does not prevent the fasting from eating until the whiteness spreading along the horizon emerges. As a matter of fact, the whiteness that remains after the disappearance of red shafaq, does not prevent performing the isha' prayer.[99]"*

Ibn Qudamah from Hanbalis says: *"The fajr prayer time begins by the rise of the second shafaq; there is consensus (ijma) on this. The information about times proves this. The second fajr is the whiteness expanding on the horizon. It is called fajr as-sadiq since, it gives you absolute information about the 'subh'. Subh combines the whiteness and redness. That is why a person who has red and white skin is called asbah = أَصْبَحَ .[100]"*

Imam Shaafi says: *"When the second fajr emerges horizontally, the fajr prayer can be performed. Anyone who offers the prayer before fajr is horizontally apparent, repeats it when he is satisfied that it became apparent, so that he finishes his prayer as it is still twilight.[101]"*

Abu'l Fadl Salih, the son of Ahmad b. Hanbal asks about the fajr which forbids the fasting ones from eating and drinking. Ahmad B. Hanbal says: *"There are two fajrs. One spreads vertically, the other horizontally. The one that forbids eating and drinking is the horizontal fajr.[102]"*

---

[95] Abu Jafar at-Tahawi (d. 321 h.), Sharh al-mean al-asar (Yusuf Abdulrahman al-Mar'ash divided into chapters, sub-sections and enumerated the hadiths.) 1414/1994. 1/184.

[96] Mufradat الضوء المنتشر الذي يعين على الإبصار،

[97] Sarakhsi (d. 483 h.), al- Mabsut, 1/141.
وَهُوَ الْبَيَاضُ الْمُنْتَشِرُ فِي الْأُفُقِ

[98] Al- Kasani (d. 587 h.), Badai al-sanai, 1/155. 1406/1986.

[99] Malik b. Anas (d. 179 h.), al- Mudawwana al-kubra, Dar al-kutub al-ilmiyah, 1994/1415, v. I, p. 265.

[100] Ibn Qudamah (d. 62 h.) al-Mughni, Kahira 1968/1388, v I, p. 279, 529. Paragraph.

[101] Shaafi, al-Umm, v. I, p. 93.

[102] Ahmed b. Hanbal, Masail al-Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal (d. 241h.) (narration of his son Abi'l-Fadl Salih (203/266 h.)) India, v. III, p. 202, paragraph 1653.

III. PRAYING AND FASTING IN POLAR REGIONS

As the sunrays are continuously incident at 90 degrees at the equator, the duration of days and nights are nearly equal. In summer, the length of days and nights are also equal at the poles. The permanence of the duha and elimination of the night's indicatorship, cannot be used as evidence for claiming one of them to be shorter or longer than the other. This equality continues throughout the salat tropic where the sun never sets.

In the winter, the duration of the daytime beyond the salat tropic, depends on the incoming rays.

A. DHUL-QARNAYN IN POLAR REGION

In the following verses, it is told that Dhul-Qarnayn had been to places where the sun did not set:

ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَ سَبَبًا .حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطْلُعُ عَلَى قَوْمٍ لَمْ نَجْعَلْ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهَا سِتْرًا . كَذَلِكَ وَقَدْ أَحَطْنَا بِمَا لَدَيْهِ خُبْرًا

"Then he (Dhul-Qarnayn) followed a way until he reached the place where the sun did not set. He saw that the sun rises above a people but We did not set any barriers between it and the people. There it is; We surely knew all about that people." (Al-Kahf/ The Cave 18:89-91)

The expression مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ= Matli'ash-Shams, is the place where sunlight is received from the top[103]. Having no barriers in between, means that the sun revolves continuously. Such a place is where "the sun does not set".

The expression "طَلَعَ عَلَي = talaa ala" is used for a thing viewing from the top[104]. Since the sun does not rise from the top but the horizon, the word مَطْلِعَ matli' cannot be used as 'the rising place of the sun'. Also, the observer sees the rising place of the sun, but cannot see the people living there. Dhul-Qarnayn cannot understand the absence of a barrier between such a distant people and the sun.

The scholars of exegeses also used the word for a place where the sunlight is received from the top, but they could not resolve the issue of barrier. In the exegesis of Tabari, the following commentaries were added:

a. "The place where that people lived was inconvenient to build houses. They used to dive when the sun rose and they used to pasture when it set, like the animals did."

This is obviously not possible. Nobody can stay in the water the whole day. Also, no human being can feed on pasturing like animals.

b. "They did not build any houses. They used to enter the cavities in the ground or they used to swim from sunrise till the sunset, because there was no mountain there. Once an army arrived there, the people said: "The sun does not rise above you while you are here." "Then, we wait here until it does...

[103] Lisan al-Arab

والمَطْلِعُ الموضع الذي تَطْلُعُ عليه الشمس

[104]

جمهرة اللغة (2 / 915)

وكل بادٍ لَك من عُلُوّ فقد طَلَعَ عَلَيْك

تهذيب اللغة (2 / 99)

والمطلِع: الْموضع الَّذِي تطلع عَلَيْهِ الشَّمْس وَهُوَ قَوْله تَعَالَى: {حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطْلُعُ عَلَى قَوْمٍ} (الْكَهْف: 90)

What is this heap?", they said. "These are the corpses of the army on which the sun rose; they all died here.", people answered. The army cleared off immediately."

The sentence "The sun does not rise above you while you are here." supports that the place is a polar region, describing the days when the sun does not rise.

c. "These are black people[105]."

Muhammed Hamdi Yazir of Emil says:

"They do not have buildings, not even clothes. They burn under the sun. There are likewise naked people in Sudan and Australia, even today".

All the Bedouins and nomads are in this situation. It cannot have been meant by this verse because, such people can be met everywhere.

The common ground of these interpretations is that, مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ= matli' al-shams, is not 'the rising place of the sun', but 'where the sunlight is received from the top'. In such a place, the barrier between the sun and the people is the darkness of the night. If darkness is absent, then that place becomes where the sun does not set.

Dhul-Qarnayn is an orderly servant of Allah. Since Allah commands five times of prayer to all prophets, it is unthinkable that he did not use to pray.

Ones living in and close to the Polar Regions, are also responsible for all types of worship. They have no privileges or responsibilities different than other people. The main issue is getting to know this subject well and complying with the rulings of Qur'an on it.

B. THE TROPIC OF SALAT

Since the Earth inclines to one side once a year and to the other side once a year like a cradle, the sunrise and sunset points continuously move northwards from the 21st of March on. After the 26th of June the sun does not set beginning with the latitude 66°.33'. The time when the sun approaches the horizon at most is 12 o'clock at night in local time. It is the exact north. The angle between the sun and the observer is 0 degree at the beginning. It increases by one at each latitude and becomes 23 degrees, 27 minutes at the northern pole.

In the meantime, the sun gets out of sight in the southern polar region beginning with the latitude -66°.33'. The sun is closest to the horizon at noontime here. At that time, the angle between the sun and the horizon is 0 degree. This angle decreases by one at each parallel towards the southern pole, and becomes 23 degrees, 27 minutes at the pole.

The opposite of this situation, occurs at southern and northern Polar Regions on the 21st of December. Nights with sun and daytime without sun, occur in these regions in some part of the year.

June 21st and December 21st are the days of solstice. Therefore, 23°.27' north of equator is called the tropic of Cancer, and 23°.27' south of equator is called the tropic of Capricorn. At these dates, conditions of solstice are met also in the Polar Regions. Days draw in beginning with the 21st of June and daytime without sun approaches. Daytime extends from the 21st of December on, and keeps extending until sunny nights occur. Since the rulings of Qur'an are different about these regions, 23 degrees 27 minutes below of both poles, that are ±66°.33' latitudes, are called the tropics of salat.

At these dates, brief sunrises and sunsets occur from the tropics of salat up to the latitudes of ±45°. The sun seems to be passing behind a mountain. Since this is not a real rise or set, the effect of the

[105] Tafsir Al-Tabari 18/100-101.

salat tropic is seen up to the latitude of 45 degrees. The change from latitudes ±66°.33’ up to latitudes ±45 degrees, is equivalent to the change from equator to latitudes ±45 degrees. There are four main measures of the time calculations to be applied on these regions.

1. Sun is not mentioned in the descriptions of day and night for these regions. The Glorified Allah informs us of this as follows:

وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ آيَتَيْنِ فَمَحَوْنَا آيَةَ اللَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَا آيَةَالنَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً لِتَبْتَغُواْ فَضْلاً مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُواْ عَدَدَالسِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَصَّلْنَاهُ تَفْصِيلاً

“And We have made the night and daytime two signs, and We eliminated the sign of the night, while We have made the sign of the daytime being illuminating; that you may seek bounty from your Lord, and that you may know the count of the years and the calculation: all things have We explained in detail.” (Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17:12)

People assume the sun as the indicator of night and daytime. It is called night when the sun is below the horizon and daytime when it is above. Daytime is bright since the sun is apparent and night is dark since it is not. Since Allah eliminated the indicator of the night, not every night has to be dark everywhere. The sun may be above the horizon and may eliminate the darkness of the night, since there is not an indispensable indicator of the night.

The indicator of daytime is ‘being illuminating’. It is a characteristic of daytime, not the sun. Besides the verse above, ‘being illuminating’ is mentioned in three more verses as the characteristic of daytime. One of them is as follows:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ اللَّيْلَ لِتَسْكُنُواْ فِيهِ وَالنَّهَارَ مُبْصِرًا إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ

“He is the One who made you the night that you may rest therein, and has made the daytime illuminating. Verily in this are signs for those who listen.” (Yunus/ Jonah 10:67)

Other two verses are An-Naml/ The Ant 27:86 and Al-Mu'min/ The Believer 40:61.

Regarding ‘being illuminating’ as a characteristic of daytime, withdraws the sun from being the sign of the daytime. Then, night and daytime must be re-defined, and sun must be left out of their descriptions.

In fact, polar region inhabitants have found out this by their own fitra (disposition), and separated the days when the sun does not set below the horizon into two groups as daytime and night. Partially or completely sunny days have been called ‘white nights’. The brightness formed by the reflected sunray, is called daytime when the sun does not partially or completely rise. If it were for some scholars from that community, they would have understood the related verses and ended the disturbance of worship times.

Related verses were not understood so far, since no Islamic scholars lived in Polar Regions. This issue was mentioned under the heads of “Indicator of Daytime” and “Indicator of Night”.

2. The measures for the manazil (stages) of sunrays in other regions, are applied on to these regions, too. The Glorified Allah commands:

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاء وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَّرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُواْ عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ مَا خَلَقَ اللهُ ذَلِكَ إِلاَّ بِالْحَقِّ يُفَصِّلُ الآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

“It is He Who made the sun to be a source of light and the moon to be a reflector of light, and He who measured out stages for it (the sunlight); that you might know the count of years and the calculation. Nowise did Allah create this but pointing out the truth and righteousness. Does He explain His Signs in detail, for a group of people who know.” (Yunus/ Jonah 10/5)

Detailed explanation of this verse was given above.

The expression ‘that you might know the count of years and the calculation’ in the verse, is mentioned in Al-Isra 17:12, too. Although the sun is left out of the definitions of night and daytime, the stages (manazil) of the sunlight, that is, the circular path it follows and the angles between the sunrays and the earth, are taken as the basis for calculation. The basis is not the sun itself, but its stages (manazil).

The following part of the verse redirects us to other verses related to measures of time:

بِالْحَقِّ يُفَصِّلُ الآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

“He explains His Signs in detail, for a group of people who know.” (Yunus/ Jonah 10:5)

3. Daily worship and resting times

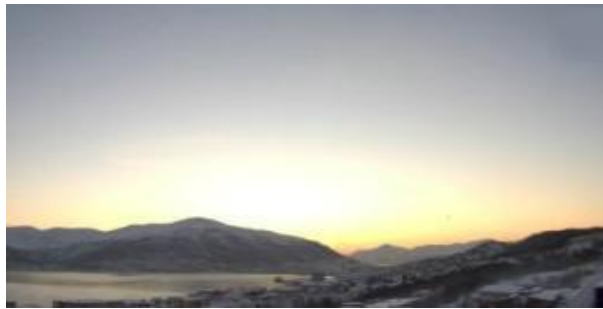
They are separated into two groups as night and daytime. When the sun is not anymore a measure for the night or daytime, and the stages of the sun become a measure, we find the measures for those stages in Qur’an, too.

a. Dhuhr (Noon)

While expressing the prayer times, Qur’an only mentions the Sun for the Dhuhr. Dhuhr starts when the sun declines westwards from its peak point at noontime.

أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ لِدُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ ...

“Keep up the prayer from the westwards decline of the sun...” (Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17:78)

The westwards decline of the sun, means crossing the meridian. The easiest thing to calculate is this passing even though the sun does not rise or set at all. If we are to observe this time in places where the sun does not set, we wait for the shadows to head for the east. For the places where the sun does not rise, we understand the time of dhuhr as the aura of the sun heads westwards.

Noontime in Tromsø when the Sun does not rise. The aura of the Sun is clearly visible to the eye.

b. Afternoon Sleep (Qaylulah)

Allah Almighty created the mankind suitable for sleeping in the night and the afternoon. Both in these times, we relax and lose our attention. A siesta makes us rested and refreshed; and also helps us practice the night prayers easily. Allah Almighty ordains for resting and the times of sleep as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آَمَنُوا لِيَسْتَأْذِنْكُمُ الَّذِينَ مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَبْلُغُوا الْحُلُمَ مِنْكُمْ ثَلَاثَ مَرَّاتٍ مِنْ قَبْلِ صَلَاةِ الْفَجْرِ وَحِينَ تَضَعُونَ ثِيَابَكُمْ مِنَ الظَّهِيرَةِ وَمِنْ بَعْدِ صَلَاةِ الْعِشَاءِ ثَلَاثُ عَوْرَاتٍ لَكُمْ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا عَلَيْهِمْ جُنَاحٌ بَعْدَهُنَّ طَوَّافُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْضُكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمُ الْآَيَاتِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

"Oh you who believe! Let those whom your right hands possess, and the (children) among you who have not come of age ask your permission (before they come to your presence), on three occasions: before dawn prayer; the time when you take off your clothes in the afternoon; and after the isha' prayer. These are your three times of undress. Outside those times it is not a sin for you or for them to move about attending to each other. Thus Allah makes clear the signs for you for Allah is All-Knowing and judges rightly." (An-Noor/ The Light 24:58)

Noon time should allow us to pray and rest for a little while.

c. Asr

Noon

Asr

Maghrib

The shadow when the sun is at the peak point is called *fay zawal*. Asr begins when every object has a shadow of its own length after substracting the *fay zawal*. This time can be calculated easily because the sun would be just in the middle of noon and maghrib. For the places where the sun does not set, the western point is the point that the sun sets on the 21st of March or the 21st of September. The daytime and the night are of equal length in these places, since there is no reason to assume one of the two is longer from the other.

For those places where the sun never rises, asr begins when the aura of the sun passes from the middle point between the noon and the maghrib. In these times; days are bright but short, nights are dark but long.

d. Maghrib

For the places where the sun does not set or sets for a short time, it is necessary to base on the noon time and accept the beginning of maghrib when the sun travels 90° from noon to the west. There is no other measure for calculation.

This is also easy to observe. A T square is placed facing the side of the sun. When the shadow passes the eastern point, that means the sun passes the western point, and the time for maghrib begins.

For the places where the sun does not rise, night starts with the darkening of eastern horizon, just like in a mountainous terrain where the beginning of the night is understood by the same event.

The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) says:

إذا أقبل الليل وأدبر النهار، وغابت الشمس فقد أفطر الصائم

"When the night shows its face, and the day turns back on you, and the sun sets, the fasting one makes dinner."[106]

This hadith explains the maghrib both for the mountainous terrains and for the places where the sun does not rise.

It is important that the sun is not being mentioned in the verse regarding fasting. Allah Almighty ordains:

"Complete your fast till night-fall." (Al-Baqarah/The Cow 2:187)

If it was said "till sunset", then it would be impossible to fast in the tropic of salat.

e. Isha'

Time of isha' begins with the disappearance of first **shafaq** (the mixing of red lights and white lights). At this point, the sun would be 8.5° below the horizon. This issue has been explained in the related parts.

We have observed the disappearance of shafaq in Tromsø when the sun did not use to rise and we confirmed that the sun was 8.5° below the horizon at that time. A new journey is necessary to see the situation in the further northern places.

For the places, where the sun does not set or sets for a short time, isha' enters when the sun travels 98.5 degrees towards the west after crossing the meridian. If it is to be observed, a T square is placed on the ground. The distance between the west and the north is divided into five. When the sun crosses one fifth of that arch the time of isha' starts.

f. End of Isha'

The name for the darkness of the night in the Qur'an is **'Ghasaq Al-Layl'**. It is the end of isha', because the Glorified Allah ordains:

... أَقِمِ الصَّلاَةَ ... إِلَى غَسَقِ اللَّيْلِ

"Keep up the prayer … until the darkness of the night" (Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17:78)

In Arabic, the word 'ghasaq' comes with two meanings. One of them is the time when the second shafaq disappears and the darkness becomes denser.[107] According to the observations we made, the sun would be 17° below the horizon at this point.

The real meaning of ghasaq is chilliness. For the places where the sun does not set, it is the time when the sun moves 107° from the meridian and the chilliness of the night starts.

There are two more words from the same origin, ghasiq (الغاسق) and ghassaq (الغساق) in Qur'an. Zajjaj[108] said al-ghasiq means cold and the night is called al-ghasiq because it is colder than daytime.[109] From the same origin al-ghassaq is said to mean blackfrost (الزمهرير = az-zamhareer).[110] These verses confirm that meaning:

[106] Muslim, Siyam 51 – (1100).
[107] Zamakhshari, op.cit.,v. VII, p. 339.
[108] Ibrahim b. as-Sirri b. Sahl Abu Ishaq az-Zajjaj, d. 311 h.
[109] Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Al-Azhari, al-Harawi, (d. 370 h.), Tahqiq. Muhammad Iwaz Mur'ib (محمد عوض مرعب), v. VIII, p. 31-31. Beirut, 2001,
[110] Al-Tabari prefers this meaning in his interpretation. See ftn. 56

هَذَا وَإِنَّ لِلطَّاغِينَ لَشَرَّ مَآبٍ .جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَوْنَهَا فَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ . هَذَا فَلْيَذُوقُوهُ حَمِيمٌ وَغَسَّاقٌ . وَآخَرُ مِن شَكْلِهِ أَزْوَاجٌ

"There it is; indeed, for the transgressors is an evil future, Hell... across which they will burn. What an evil place to dwell! There it is; so let them taste what is very hot and ghassaq (very cold). Similarly, many other pairs of punishments." (Sad 38:55-58)

"many other pairs of punishments" means that hameem (حَمِيمٌ) and ghassaq (غَسَّاقٌ) is a pair of punishments. Hameem means very hot, and ghassaq means very cold. Ibn Abbas said for the ghassaq, "it is so cold that it bites"[111]. One verse is as follows:

لَّا يَذُوقُونَ فِيهَا بَرْدًا وَلَا شَرَابًا إِلَّا حَمِيمًا وَغَسَّاقًا

"They will not taste therein any coolness or a drink. Except what is very hot and very cold." (An-Naba'/ The Great Tidings 78:24-25)

Due to these verses, ghasaq al-layl is the end of isha', and the time when the chilliness of the night starts at white nights.

g. Time of Sleep

Ghasaq al-layl is the time of sleep and rest, starting with the darkness of the night and lasting until the (true) fajr. The Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.) did not like sleeping before isha', and talking after it.[112]

It is prohibited to enter someone's presence without taking permission after isha'. Let us repeat the verse above as it is very important.

"O you who believe! Let those whom your right hands possess, and the children among you who have not come of age ask your permission (before they come to your presence), on three times: before fajr prayer; the while ye doff your clothes for the noonday heat; and after the isha' prayer: these are your three times of undress. Except these times, there is no sin for you or for them to move about attending to each other. Thus He makes clear the signs to you. Allah is The All-Knowing and judges rightly." (An-Noor/The Light 24:58)

This verse informs that there should be enough time to rest between the isha' and the fajr prayer.

h. The Time for Tahajjud

The night prayer (tahajjud) is practiced after sleeping for a while in the night and waking up before the true fajr. Allah Almighty made this prayer obligatory for His Messenger:

وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ نَافِلَةً لَكَ عَسَى أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَحْمُودًا

"And wake up for prayer in some part of the night as an additional obligation for you: It may be that your Lord will raise you to a station of praise and glory!" (Al-Isra/ The Night Journey 17:79)

This prayer is not obligatory for other Muslims, however it is strongly encouraged in these verses:

[111] Alauddin Ali b. Muhammad b. Ibrahim b. Umar ash-Shaykh al-Hazin, (d. 741 h.), Tahqiq Tashi Muhammad Ali Shakhin, Beirut, 1415 h. V. IV, p. 45.(4/45)

[112] Bukhari, Adhan, al-Kiraat fi'l-fajr 104; Muslim, al-Masajid and mawadi as-salah, 235 – (647)

إِنَّمَا يُؤْمِنُ بِآيَاتِنَا الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهَا خَرُّوا سُجَّدًا وَسَبَّحُوا بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ. تَتَجَافَى جُنُوبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

"Only those who believe in Our verses, when they are reminded with them, fall down in prostration and exalt with praise of their Lord without arrogance, for He makes everything so beautiful. They stay away from their beds; they supplicate their Lord in fear and aspiration, and from what We have provided them, they spend." (As-Sajda/ The Prostration 32:15-16)

وَاذْكُرِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَاسْجُدْ لَهُ وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا

"Keep the name of your Lord on your mind through day and night. And during a part of the night prostrate to Him; and exalt Him during the long part of the night."

(Al-Insan/ The Human 76:25-26)

Al-Kashshaaf interpreted this part of the verse as "Pray the tahajjud during the long part of the night".[113]

As it is explained in the regarding section, the Qur'an separated the night into three parts. First part is the time for the prayers of maghrib and isha', and consists of 17° within the manazil of the sun. Third part is the time of fajr, which consists of 8.5° within the manazil. Second and the middle part is the tahajjud which is the longest part of the three. Sahar is also a part of it and has a manazil of 8.5°. As this part is the longest part of the night, it should last more than 17° in the manazil. If we accept the ghasaq al-layl at least 9°, the middle of the night lasts at least 17.5° in the manazil, and becomes the longest part of the night.

That is to say, from sunset till sunrise, the manazil of the sun should be at least 17+17.5+8.5=43°. This means that the sun should be at least 21 degrees 30 minutes below the horizon while it crosses the meridian. This occurs at 45° latitude on the 21st of June. Therefore, this latitude is the last point from the poles that the measures of the Qur'an for the night, occur in this date. From poles to this point, the calculation of prayer times, should be made according to the sun's manazil instead of the sun itself. For separating this area from the other part of the Earth, we use the term "Tropic of Salat".

i. Sahar

Time of Sahar is the time between the end of the night and the true fajrs. Sahar, in Arabic signifies the mixing of the first white lights of the day with the darkness of the night. In this time, both the signs for night and daytime can be seen.[114]

Time of sahar is like the time of isha'. The time of isha' starts with the mixing of red lights and white lights in the western horizon, and continues till the last bit of sunlight leaves the horizon. The sun would be 17° below the western horizon at this time. Similarly, sahar starts when the sun is 17° below the eastern horizon. At this time, very little illumination in the eastern horizon can be seen.[115] The

---

[113] Kashshaaf, op. cit.. v. IV, p. 675

وَسَبِّحْهُ لَيْلًا طَوِيلًا وتهجد له هزيعا طويلا من الليل وَ في الصحاح: مضى هزيع من الليل، أى: طائفة

The word sabbih (سَبِّحْ) is used for the optional (nafilah) prayers in Qur'an. This matter will be reviewed in the section about times of nafilah prayers.

[114] Qurtubi, Muhammad b. Ahmad, al-Jami al-ahkam al-Qur'an, v. XVII, p. 144, Kahira, 1384/1964.

والسحر: هو ما بين آخر الليل وطلوع الفجر، وهو في كلام العرب اختلاط سواد الليل ببياض أول النهار، لان في هذا الوقت يكون مخاييل الليل ومخاييل النهار.

[115] Jawhari, Ismail b. Hammad (d. 393 h.), al-Sihah, Art. سحر. (thk: Ahmed Abdulgafûr Atar), Beirut 1407/1987.

والسَحَرُ قُبَيْلَ الصُبْحِ

illumination increases until the red lights and the white lights are clearly separated from each other. Because of the similarity between sahar and fajr, sahar has been called ‘fajr al-kazib’, meaning ‘the false fajr’.

We are encouraged in Qur’an to beg Allah for forgiveness especially at this time of the night. Regarding verse is as follows:

كَانُوا قَلِيلًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُونَ وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ

“They sleep so little by night and they beg for the mercy of Allah at times of dawn.”

(Adh-Dhariyat / The Winnowing Winds 51:17-18)

The time of sahar is also the time for fasting Muslims to make their early breakfast.

j. Fajr Prayer and Time of Fajr

The lights which seem like a dome and consist of mixed colors at sahar time, start to dissociate and spread along the horizon as the end of sahar approaches. When the blackness of the land, the red light band and the white light band are separated by certain lines; the time of (true) fajr starts. At this time, the sun would be 8.5° below the horizon. For the places where the sun does not set, this time starts when the sun approaches the eastern point by 8.5°. If it is to be observed, one should place a T square to ground and wait for the shadows to travel four fifths of the circle from the south to the east. When the shadows cross the western point, that means the sun passed the eastern point, and should be accepted as the sunrise and the beginning of the day.

At the times when the sun did not set in Tromsø, the fajr started as the sun was 8.5° below the horizon. To accept it as the beginning of the day, one should wait for the lights of morning to reach the western point. We need to make a new observation to be able to calculate this exactly.

4. Protecting the Balance (Mizan)

Mizan, as mentioned in the “Concepts” chapter, means balance. Allah Almighty ordains:

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ . أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ . وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ

“And the sky, He raised it up, and set the Balance. So weigh with justice, and skimp not in the Balance” (Ar-Rahman/ The Endlessly Beneficent 55:7-9)

There are two reasons for the sign of night to be eliminated. One of them is “to seek the bounty from the Lord”. This bounty has both the physical and the spiritual aspects. The physical side arises from the axial tilt. If not for the axial tilt, the sun would always warm a specific area, unable to give enough heat to the other parts of the Earth. The seasons would not exist and the natural balance would be disrupted. On the other side the axial tilt has changed the definition of day and night.

The cause of removing the sun as the main sign of the daytime, is for us “to know the count of the years and the calculation”. In this case, while we make the calculation for the prayer times, we should look out for it to provide us the seeking for Allah’s bounty with no obstacle. Namely, while the night time is being calculated, the sun itself should be ignored and it should be ensured that the Muslims in the region are able to wake up at midnight and pray, beg for mercy of Allah before fajr, and have the early breakfast in Ramadan. Allah Almighty ordains for his spiritual bounty as follows:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَى عَلَى سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيَغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are stern against those who conceal, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating, seeking bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure. Their mark is on their faces from the trace of prostration. That is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is as a plant which produces its offshoots and strengthens them so they grow firm and stand upon their stalks, delighting the sowers - so that Allah may enrage by them the disbelievers. Allah has promised to those who believe and do righteous deeds among them, covering up their misdeeds and a great reward.”
(Al-Fath / The Conquest 48:29)

If the times of prayers and fasting are calculated in accordance with the measures of Allah, both the Muslims would be able to seek the bounty of Allah wherever they are, and the non-Muslims would be encouraged for Islam.

The second reason mentioned in the verse is “to know the count of the years and the calculation”. Therefore, we must believe in the existence of night and daytime at every place on earth within 24 hours and to make the calculation according to the measures in Qur’an.

The Balance is disrupted because of defining the night and daytime regarding the sun. The Presidency of Religious Affairs in Turkey, changed its calendar according to the 06/10-11/2009 decision of the High Council of Religious Matters taken about “the prayer times beyond the 45th latitude”. As an example, two different calendars published the same year for Helsinki (60°) is as follows:

Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha’
23.08.2009	1.54	5.48	13.30	17.23	21.00	22.38
23.08.2009	4.18	5.48	13.30	17.23	21.00	22.20

The time of fajr was extended for 2 hours and 24 minutes without relying on any verses or hadiths.[116]

The calendar of Rabitat al-alem al-Islam for the same date is as follows:[117]

Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha’
23.08.2012	3.20	6.06	13.37	17 32	21 06	11.37

The calendar of Tatar Turks who live in Helsinki is as follows:

Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha’
23.08.2010	4.41	6.31	-	-	20.14	22.30

[116] Special thanks to Yakup Yilmaz who sent us this information on 24th of April, 2011.
[117] www.islamicFinder.org

None of these are based on a verse or hadith.

Three consecutive days in the calendar of Rabita for Tromsø, Norway is as follows:

Date	Fajr	Sunrise	Dhuhr	Asr	Maghrib	Isha’
15.01.2012	**5.35**	**7:19**	**11:54**	**14:09**	**16:28**	**18:07**
16.01.2012	**6.12**	**11.23**	**11.54**	**12.00**	**12.25**	**17.24**
17.01.2012	**6.10**	**11.09**	**11.54**	**11.58**	**12.40**	**17.27**

These following statements are remarked in the ground of this decision of the High Council of Religious Matters:

1. Prayer is one of the five pillars of Islam, and a duty for Muslims which is to be practiced at certain times within a day. Allah Almighty commands: “Indeed, the prayer has been decreed upon the believers within specified times” (An-Nisa/The Women 4:103). Therefore the time is one of the main conditions for prayers. Hence in normal conditions, it is not permitted to practice the prayers before or after its defined time. Prayer times which are concisely mentioned in Qur’an [al-Baqarah (2): 238; Hud (11): 114; al-Isra (17): 78; Rum (30):17/18; Qaf (50): 39/40; al-Insan (76): 25/26] are clarified by the hadith and practices of the Prophet. Within the narrations from the Prophet, we are given some atmospheric measures which originate from the rotation of the earth; such as dawn, sunrise, westwards declination of the sun at noon, shadows being either the same or twice as long as the objects other than fay-zawal at noon, sunset and the disappearance of the twilight at the western horizon.

2. At times and places where the ordinary measures of prayer times occur, the prayers will be practiced according to those times in Sunnah. For the places in which these measures occur partially or not at all, all of the fatwa commissions in the World agree upon practicing the prayers by “assessing” the times. However, there is no consensus on any methods of assessment till now.

It seems that the Presidency did not rely on any basis while making this change. The members of The Council could bring forward the time of fajr much earlier if they wanted.

It cannot be accepted for Allah Who stipulated specific times for prayers, not to create those times in certain areas and pass on His authority to a group of people for estimating and determining them.

As it is seen, the Balance in the issue of prayer times is completely disrupted. But if the four measures of Qur’an are respected, there should be no obstacle to calculating the local prayer times in the Tropic of Salat. I pray to Allah Almighty, to make this work successful and efficient.

Prof. Abdulaziz BAYINDIR